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Mary Lane ER, cancer unit to close in June

Facility set to be closed in two years

By Melina Bourdeau
Staff writer

WARE – Baystate Health announced it plans to close Mary Lane Outpatient Center's doors completely by 2023, with the closure of the Emergency Room and cancer unit in June.

Baystate Health President and CEO Mark A. Keroack and President and Chief Administrative Officer Molly Gray announced the closure of the 112-year-old facility in a press conference on Tuesday.

"This is part and parcel of an ongoing assessment that Baystate does to adapt to changes in demand for our services and to stay contemporary in how we deliver our care," he said.

Factors for closure

They attributed Mary Lanes' closure to several factors – the building's age, the lack of use by the community and lack of staff retention.

Keroack said over the years Mary Lane's volumes for in-patient services were declining to the "point where they averaged in the single-digits in 2016 when we decided to shutter those services."

In 2016, Baystate pledged to keep the emergency department open at Mary Lane for at least sev-



Baystate Health plans to ask the Department of Public Health to let it close its Mary Lane campus and move services to Palmer and Springfield.

eral years.

"Patients are actually choosing to receive care in other locations," Gray said.

"Today, nearly half of Baystate Mary Lane Outpatient Center is vacant by day and 90%

unused at night. Baystate Mary Lane's emergency department has had minimal utilization for true emergency services of the 28 patients who arrive at that site for care 85% or 24 out of 28 of the

patients present with common, minor, non-urgent conditions like a cold, flu or sprain that could be treated in a primary care setting."

Additionally, Baystate has had difficulty recruiting and retaining

providers in the area, especially in small practices. Gray said in the last several years, it has lost six primary care positions in its Eastern Region.

"This is a market reality that reflects the need to consolidate practices in support of clinicians," Gray said. "Candidates really seek robust, multi-specialty practices."

Another contributing factor to the closure is the building's age.

Gray said "to maintain steady-state operations would require over \$5 million in construction investments to maintain the facility, compliance and operations over the next three years."

Baystate Wing

Baystate will consolidate operations at Baystate Wing to "better invest resources in state-of-the-art care, emergency care and physician recruitment and retention. This will really allow us for more effective staffing in an area where recruiting clinical professionals can be challenging."

Five years ago, Baystate closed in-patient services at Mary Lane. Local members of the community opposed the decision, including the Keep Mary Lane Local Coalition.

Keroack said five years ago he heard "some really raw emotions from people who had fond memories of Mary Lane."

"I understand how a community gets attached to a hospital, my responsibility is to take a look at what can we do there. What's the best way to configure services for all the 100,000 people in the dozens of town that are served in our Eastern Region," Keroack said. "When you look at what people feels in their hearts is often not matched with what they're doing in terms of their choices of where to go when

they're sick...It's something where I need to put my emotions aside and take an objective look can we legitimately offer something there that makes sense or try to consolidate services and make Wing more robust."

Next steps

The formal process requires Baystate provide notice to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health which will be filed in the days following the announcement, Keroack said. The DPH will conduct hearings and issue a ruling

Please see **MLH**, page 6



Turley Publications staff photo by Melina Bourdeau
Cedarbrook Village resident Charlotte Borlikoski received her COVID-19 vaccine and took her picture on the red carpet set up for recipients.

Cedarbrook Village staff, residents receive vaccines

WARE – The first phase of COVID-19 vaccines are beginning to be rolled out, which includes congregate housing, and Cedarbrook Village residents and staff received their shots Monday.

About 75 people at the assisted and independent living facility on South Street were vaccinated. The vaccine comes in two shots, and they received their first one this week.

Health insurance removed from union negotiations

Board now free to consider GIC plans

By Eileen Kennedy
Staff writer

WARREN – The Quaboag School Committee took a 8-0 vote Monday to adopt sections 21 to 23 of state law Chapter 32B, allowing it to remove decisions on employee health insurance from union negotiations. The sections also allow the district to join the General Insurance Commission health plans and to offer teachers another Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association-equivalent.

Committee members Andrew Schwenker, Jason Morgan, Sarah Tetreault, Greg Morse, David Kirk, Tracy Waz, Dustin Atwood and Dr. James Wilson III voted to adopt the state law.

Committee members DeAnna Shepherd, Anne Banville, Craig Burgess and Matthew Peloquin abstained as the State Ethics Committee has ruled they

each have a conflict-of-interest because a relative works in the school district.

Currently, the Quaboag Education Association, has a Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance plan through the MIIA. For the current Blue Cross Blue Shield plan, through MIIA, the district pays \$2,514,589, and employees pay \$838,190, of the \$3,352,758 total.

During a meeting last fall, School Committee member David Kirk said the health insurance takes up about 13% of the school district's budget of almost \$18 million, and needed to be looked at.

"We've had many conversations for a good four years or more," said Quaboag School Committee Chairman Andrew Schwenker during Monday's meeting. "We did take a vote on this back in October, but it did not pass."

In past meetings last fall teachers asked the committee not to take that step, but to negotiate with the union about poten-

tial changes. Union members said then they were willing to consider money-saving changes to the health insurance plan.

Last September the district hired insurance consultant, Cook & Co. Insurance Services, of Marshfield, which started work on the analyses on Sept. 28, to help determine what health insurance options were available and what kind of savings could be realized through changing plans. Jill Gallant-Shaw and Sue Shillue, of Cook & Co., presented numerous scenarios at a number of meetings over the fall, which had a range of savings from less than \$250,000 to more than \$300,000 a year.

Shillue told the committee in the fall that any negotiations with the teachers would have to wrap up by Feb. 1 to carry out the 60 to 90-day processes associated with changing insurance plans. If negotiations were unsuccessful, the Committee would still have time to adopt the state regulations and proceed in picking a less expensive health insurance plan.

Selectmen support Ware River Park grant application

By Paula Ouimette
Staff Writer

HARDWICK – At its virtual meeting Monday, Cynthia Henshaw, executive director of the East Quabbin Land Trust, and William Zinni, of the Conservation Commission, presented the Board of Selectmen with an application for the 2021 Mass Trail Grant to make improvements to Ware River Park in Gilbertville. Selectmen approved providing a letter of support for the Conservation Commission application for the 2021 Mass Trail Grant Program.

Ware River Park encompasses three different tracts of land acquired by the town in the 1990s with the assistance of EQLT. It is about 10 acres, spanning from the gazebo all the way to the former Dunroamin Country Club property. Ware River Park also features the Gilbertville Fitness Trail, which is having erosion problems and an abundance of invasive plants. Many large trees will need to be removed, some of which were damaged by gypsy moths. Henshaw said they would also like to improve the existing canoe launch. The Thompson parcel, which is the

Please see **GRANT**, page 3

Rail plan advocates plan next steps, believe ridership underestimated

By Michael Harrison
mharrison@turley.com

PALMER — Now that they've had a chance to digest MassDOT's extensive feasibility study of a proposed passenger rail link connecting Pittsfield to Boston, including

stops in Palmer and Springfield, the Rail Stop Steering Committee is planning its next course.

The town-appointed committee met recently to discuss the study and set priorities, including how to prod state and federal officials not already on-board to start acting

on the project. One major issue on which all those in the meeting seem to agree is the study vastly underestimates the number of riders it would attract – a critical component of the cost benefit analysis that determines if a project is eligible for federal funding.

That's a complaint committee members and others made after a draft study – the report's predecessor – was released a few months prior. They made those feelings known and MassDOT appears to have acknowledged it in the final report, which concludes that fur-

ther study is justified.

Wary of the slow pace of government and a historic reluctance to invest in large scale infrastructure programs, committee members want to seize any momentum

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OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

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Nomination papers available for Warren positions

WARREN – Warren Town Clerk Nancy J. Lowell has announced that nomination papers are available on Wednesday, Feb. 1, for the upcoming Town Election to be held on Tuesday, May 4. There papers must be filed with the Board of Registrars in the Town Clerk’s office, for certification on or before Tuesday, March 26, at 5 p.m. Final day to withdraw as a candidate is Thursday, April 1, at 5 p.m.

Appearing on the ballot will be the following:

One, three-year assessor seat; one three-year Cemetery Commissioner; a two-year Board of Health seat; a five-year Housing Authority term; three-year term as a Park Commissioner; five-year Planning Board seat; one three-year Selectman term; a three-year Sewer Commissioner term and three-year Tree Warden position.

The Quaboag Regional School District positions will also be incorporated on the Town Ballot. Two members from the town of Warren for three-year terms and two members from the town of West Brookfield for three year terms. There is also a one-year term for Warren members.

These nomination papers are available on Wednesday, Feb. 3, at the front office of the Quaboag Regional Middle High School at 284 Old West Brookfield Road in Warren. Deadline for returning these papers is Friday, March 19, by 4 p.m.

Last day to register to vote before the Town Election is Wednesday, April 14, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., at the Town Clerk’s office in the Shepard Municipal Building on High Street.

Ware Boy Scout Troop 281 set up their tents as they camped in West Brookfield and took part in a virtual Klondike Derby and the troop’s annual Winter Deep Freeze Campout.

Winter Deep Freeze Campout

Scouts take part in virtual Klondike Derby and troop freeze-out

WEST BROOKFIELD – Boy Scout Troop 281 of Ware, sponsored by AMVETS Post 2577, was back in the woods again. This time, the Scouts were participating in a Klondike Derby, the winter version of a boy scout camporee.

Troop 281 was invited to participate in a Virtual Klondike Derby, run by the Leaders of the Revolution District, based in Connecticut Rivers Council. Troops were provided scout skill-based tasks to perform on their own, video the results and submit it to the District.

“We are used to Klondike Derbies being held with no snow” said Senior Patrol Leader Grant Pelletier-Biggs. “This group of scouts just want to do everything they can do in Scouting, snow or no snow. And with the issues with COVID, getting back into camping was a bonus.”

The troop had decided to combine the Klondike Derby event with their annual Winter Deep Freeze Campout, traditionally held in January. “The Scouts spent the prior month of weekly meetings preparing for the Deep Freeze campout” said Scoutmaster Dan Flynn. “Each week, there was skill- specific training, taught by the older experienced Scouts, which included topics like proper layering and winter first aid. We had to follow COVID guidelines so two meetings were held weekly with the troop split into two groups.”

The Klondike Derby activities for the day included fire building, hiking, wilderness survival and



Young and older Scouts got their Klondike Derby sleds out to prepare for the race, with the added challenge of trying to find a supposed injured hiker.

the traditional Klondike Derby sled race, though this time with a twist. “The youth leadership gave the patrols an additional challenge. As the event was to begin, each patrol was informed there was an injured hiker lost in the woods. All the information provided was a compass bearing and estimated distance. Each patrol used their sled, equipped with first aid materials to make a stretcher, and went off to retrieve the injured hiker. It was a really awesome activity and the Scouts did and excellent job” said Pelletier-Biggs.

The was a special tradition- al Scouting completion that was offered in the virtual Klondike Derby: the Dutch oven cook-off. “It takes a special effort to make a perfect a Dutch oven meal” said Flynn. The Dutch oven is regarded as the ultimate Scouting cooking method. “Nick Bousquet, one of our senior Scouts, prepared a perfect chili. His entree in the competition will certainly draw attention for an award,” he said.

With the weekend campout being held in West Brookfield, the Troop was ready for the worst possible conditions. The forecast called for temperatures in the low 20s during the day with nighttime falling to below 0, as wind chill was factored in.

“At night, members of the troop tented out, but several used available shelters” said Flynn. “At each point of the weekend, individual Scout safety and COVID precaution was at the forefront of our minds.”

Staying warm was the most important point for the weekend, but the bonus for the scouts was

Please see **CAMPOUT**, page 5

Are You Old News?

Each week the Ware River News digs into its submitted photo archives and selects a people photo to publish. We need your help to help identify those pictured.

Email your answers by Monday at noon to ekennedy@turley.com.

If anyone recognizes the people in this week's photo, please send the names and your full name to ekennedy@turley.com.

Last week's photo was of Wilton's Childrens Store in the Millyard in Ware from the 1980s.

Hardwick Town Election set for April 12

HARDWICK – The Annual Town Election will held on Monday, April 12. The last day to obtain and submit nomination papers to the Board of Registrars for certification by Monday, Feb. 22, by 5 p.m.

The last day to file nomination papers with Town Clerk is on Monday, March 8, by 5 p.m. The last day to object or withdraw nomination papers is Wednesday, March 10, by 5 p.m. The last day

to register to vote in the Annual Town Election, is on Tuesday, March 23, 8 p.m.

Voter registration will take place in the Myron E. Richardson Building at 307 Main St., Gilbertville on Tuesday, March 23, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. This is the last day and hour to register voters who wish to vote at the Annual Town Election. Mail-in voter registrations will be accepted if post-marked no later than the March 23

deadline.

Financial statements must be filed by all candidate for election by the following dates even if the candidate has no financial activity to report. The first financial report is due April 5, by 5 p.m., and the second is due on May 12, at noon.

Minorities, females and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to run for office. The town of Hardwick is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Polish plate dinner Feb. 13

WARE — St. Mary’s Church, 57 South Street will be having a pre-order sale of a Polish plate dinner. The plate will consist of three pierogi, one golombek, kiel-basa, kapusta and Polish bread. Cost of the meal is \$15. Curbside pickup will be on Saturday, Feb.

13, in the parking lot behind St. Mary’s Church. Each customer will be designated a pick-up time when placing your order. Payment should be the exact amount, either check made out to St. Mary’s Church, or cash and placed in an envelope with your name, phone

number and payment amount. Call Sylvia at 413-436-9268 or Diane at 413-967-5207, with questions and/or to order. All orders must be received by Sunday, Feb. 7. St. Mary’s thanks everyone for their support. Snow date will be Sunday, Feb. 14.



Scouts head out with their sleds for the virtual Klondike Derby.

Courtesy photos

Scouts also got to enjoy campfires and good food and hot drinks.



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COLLEGE NOTES

Cameron Barnes makes Fitchburg State’s dean’s list

FITCHBURG — Fitchburg State University President Richard S. Lapidus announced that Cameron B. Barnes, of Ware, was among the students who qualified for inclusion on the dean’s list for the fall 2020 semester.

A student is placed on the dean’s list for the semester if an average grade of 3.20 or better is attained, and the student is attending the university full time.

Fitchburg State University enrolls 7,000 day and evening students in more than 50 programs of study. The university was established in 1894.

Jessica Lafountain makes Fall 2020 President’s List

FRANKLIN – Dean College is pleased to announce a local student, Jessica Lafountain, of Ware, has earned a place on the President’s List for the fall 2020 semester. These students have demonstrated a serious commitment to their studies while at Dean College.

Founded in 1865, Dean College is a private, residential college located in Franklin, 45 minutes from Boston. Dean College offers baccalaureate degrees, associate degree programs, as well as a robust schedule of part-time continuing and professional education credit and certificate programs throughout the calendar year.

Lindsey Kelleher makes dean’s list

FRANKLIN – Dean College is pleased to announce the students that have earned a place on the Dean’s List for the fall 2020 semester. These students have demonstrated a serious commitment to their studies while at Dean College. They include Lindsey Kelleher, of Ware.

Founded in 1865, Dean College is a private, residential college located in Franklin, 45 minutes from Boston. Dean College offers baccalaureate degrees, associate degree programs, as well as a robust schedule of part-time continuing and professional education credit and certificate programs throughout the calendar year.

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Return to hybrid vote scheduled

By Eileen Kennedy
Staff meeting

WARREN – The Quaboag School Committee is scheduled to take a vote on whether to return the district’s schools to an in-person hybrid learning model on Wednesday, Jan. 28, through a Zoom meeting at 8 p.m., according to Quaboag School Superintendent Brett Kustigian. If they vote to return to the hybrid model, students will return physically beginning on Monday, Feb. 1. It will be the only topic on the agenda.

The district had gone to fully remote classes for the past three weeks, and continues in that mode. A memo of understanding between the district and the teachers states that if Warren and West Brookfield are in red high-risk designation for COVID-19 for two weeks, the district must shift to all-remote classes.

“I want to assure the general public that our schools are absolutely safe,” said Kustigian at Monday’s School Committee meeting, when the Wednesday meeting was announced. He said he also had a letter from both the West Brookfield and Warren boards of health stating they believe returning to

school is safe. He also said West Brookfield selectmen took a vote two weeks ago favoring a return to the in-school learning. Kustigian also had a discussion with the Commissioner of Education about reopening school safely and taking with the union.

He also said he received concerns from the teachers’ union, the Quaboag Education Association, about returning to the in-person hybrid model as recently as earlier that day.

According to the state Department of Health’s statistics, Warren’s positivity rate has gone from 7.6% in the numbers released Dec. 31, 2020, when it was still labeled yellow by the state, to 8.56% in the date released Jan. 7. It went to 8.16% in the data released on Jan. 14 and to 9.85% on data released Jan. 21.

West Brookfield’s was labeled red, or high risk for transmission of the disease, beginning on Dec. 22, when its positivity rate was 6.07%. It rose to 6.41% with statistics released on Dec. 31, and to 9.43% when statistics were released on Jan. 7. On Jan. 14, the data showed the rate to be 10.29%, and on Jan. 21, it dropped to 8.19 percent.

School Committee member David Kirk said the school system

could have been in hybrid learning mode all along, and he said he thought Kustigian had previously said the boards of health recommended going remote.

“Let me be perfectly crystal clear, those words never came out of my mouth,” Kustigian said.

He also said the agreement with the union was negotiated in the fall, and at the time, the state’s recommendation was to go to all-remote classes if towns were in the red for two weeks. He said the state has since changed that recommendation.

Resignation

Kustigian announced that David Kirk had resigned from the School Committee, effective Jan. 31, as he is moving out of town.

School Committee Chairman thanked Kirk for his three years on the committee. “We didn’t always agree, but I respect your comments and you’ve been a big help to us,” he said.

Warren selectmen will appoint someone to serve the rest of Kirk’s term, which ends with the May town election. Kustigian said selectmen have told him there is someone interested in serving the rest of Kirk’s term.

Cornerstone Bank announces new vice president, marketing

Alan Whitney joins the team with 25 years of experience

SOUTHBRIDGE – Cornerstone Bank, a community bank with 12 locations throughout Massachusetts, is pleased to announce Alan Whitney has joined the team in the role of vice president, marketing. Whitney comes to Cornerstone with more than 25 years of relevant industry experience.

“Alan is a seasoned veteran with fresh ideas and unbridled enthusiasm,” said Todd Tallman, president of Cornerstone Bank. “We are excited to see how he can help us continue to grow and provide an even better experience to our customers.

Whitney held past positions with Agrium Advanced Technologies and Shemin Landscape Supply. Prior to joining the workforce, he served his country for six years in the United States Navy after graduating with a degree in business/



Alan Whitney

marketing from Western New England University. He currently serves as the chairman for the Ware Board of Selectman, the governing body of the community in which he resides with his wife, Laurie.

“I look forward to building upon the successes Cornerstone Bank has already achieved. In just my few short weeks here, I have noticed the slogan ‘Built on Trust’ is more than just words. Every member of the team works hard every day to earn and maintain the trust of our customers,” said Whitney. “That’s what sets us apart and one of the main reasons I’m so excited to be a part of the organization.”

Cornerstone Bank is an independent, mutual savings bank serving residents, businesses and communities throughout Central Massachusetts. Deposits are insured in full by a combination of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Depositors Insurance Fund. The bank is an Equal Opportunity Employer, Equal Housing Lender and SBA Preferred Lender.

Annual Town Election April 12, nomination papers available

WARE – Nomination papers will be available for those individuals who wish to obtain them for the following positions that will appear on the ballot for the above-mentioned Annual Town Election, which will be held on Monday, April 12.

The seats open are two, three-year terms for selectman; one three-year term for moderator; two three-year School Committee terms; one, three-year term on the Board of Assessors; one, three-year term on the Board of Health; one, three-year term as Park Commissioner; one, one-year unexpired term as Park

Commissioner; one, three-year term as Cemetery Commissioner; one, five-year set on the Planning Board; and one, five-year term on the Ware Housing Committee.

The last date to obtain and file nomination papers with the Board of Registrars is Monday, Feb. 22,, at 5 p.m.

The last date to file nomination papers with the Town Clerk will be Monday March 8, at 5 p.m.

The last date to object to or withdraw nomination papers will be Wednesday March 10, at 5 p.m.

Any resident interested in running for any of the town offices will appear on the ballot should

please contact the Town Clerk Nancy J. Talbot to make arrangements on obtaining nomination papers by calling 413-967-9648, ext. 177, Monday through Friday between the business hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Due to COVID-19, the Town Hall currently remains closed to the public.

The current office holders will be notified that their terms are ending. They are: Selectmen, Alan Whitney and Keith Kruckas; moderator, Kathleen Coulombe; School Committee, Michael C. Foran and Julie A. Slattery; Board of Assessors, Devin M. Peterson; Board of Health, Michael F. Juda;

Park Commissioner, Kimberly Swartz; Park Commissioner, John E. Carroll; Cemetery Commissioner, Craig R. Simmons; Planning Board, Richard A. Starodoj; and Ware Housing Authority, Jonathan R. Hogan.

The last date to register to vote will be Tuesday, March 23. A voter registration will take place by appointment on March 23 until 8 p.m.; however anyone who is not a registered voter can do so by registering to vote online at www.ma.gov or by mail-in voter registration. Forms for mail-in voter registration can be found at the U S Post Office on West Street.

COLLEGE NOTES

Fairfield University congratulates local students

FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT – Fairfield University students, Isabella Quink, of Hardwick, Mass., and Kaitlyn Rousseau, of Ware, Mass., received deans list honors for the fall 2020 semester.

In order to be placed on the dean’s list, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours in a semester, have no outstanding or incomplete grades for that semester, and have attained a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better.

GRANT from page 1

tract closest to the former golf course, will have a trail and meadow, and needs a formal parking area.

Henshaw said the grant money will be primarily focused on trail access and removing invasive plants. Forty to fifty large trees will need to be removed, and the former railroad bed will need to be expanded to a 10-foot wide trail, with stone dust applied. At the time of the selectmen’s meeting, Henshaw was still waiting on an estimate for tree removal, but she said it would likely be in the \$50,000 range. Henshaw explained this is a reimbursement grant, and that the town will have to show the funds spent on the project in

order to receive the reimbursement. Henshaw and Zinni said the grant matches up to 80%, with the remaining 20% coming from the Conservation Commission fund and also volunteer hours.

Selectmen Kelly Kemp asked if the town had the funds to front this project. Chairman Kenan Young said that the town did. Zinni said that the Conservation Commission has additional funding to be used for these kinds of actions. He said the Ware River Park project is “more or less dovetailing” the work that the commission and EQLT is doing along the river.

Henshaw said the grant application deadline is Monday, Feb. 1. The town should be notified if their application was approved by fall of this year.

Liquor licenses not renewed

Three licensees did not renew their liquor license for 2021. They include: John J. Weir Post 246 American Legion Building, 14 Prospect St., Gilbertville; South Barre Rod and Gun Club, 2626 Barre Rd., Gilbertville; and Lost Towns Brewing Company, 43 Main St., Gilbertville. Selectmen Julie Quink said she understood why Lost Towns Brewing Company and the American Legion did not renew but questioned why South Barre Rod and Gun Club did not. Town Administrator Theresa Cofske said that they missed the deadline to renew, and will need to apply for a new liquor license. Cofske said the town posted a legal notice and

there will be a public hearing for those liquor licenses on Feb. 8.

Other business

The board approved a form for the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission stating that Hardwick does not see a temporary increase in resident population during the summer months.

The board shared a letter they received from the Quabbin Regional School District announcing their new COVID-19 Dashboard. The dashboard will be updated weekly on the district’s website. The board commended the school district for keeping families and residents informed about COVID-19 exposure.

Quink said that she forward-

ed an email to Cofske regarding first responder guidelines and the town’s COVID-19 policy that is currently in place. Quink asked if questions regarding the policy should be sent to Cofske or to the Board of Health’s Health Agent, Marcelino “Tex” Sarabia. Young said that all questions should be directed to Sarabia. The board agreed that as questions arise, they could amend the policy as needed.

Cofske said she is having trouble sharing documents using the Microsoft Teams platform. Young said Cofske’s computer is outdated and slow, causing the issue. Cofske said that she is supposed to be receiving a new laptop that would be set up for any board or commission to use. She will check the status of her new laptop this week.

ACCURACY WATCH

The Ware River News will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 3. To request a correction, send information to ekennedy@turley.com, or call 967-3505. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Ware River News, Attn: Editor, 80 Main St., Ware, MA 01082.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

RIGHT OF WAY MAINTENANCE

As required by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 132B, National Grid (New England Power and/or Massachusetts Electric Company) hereby gives notice that it intends to selectively apply herbicides along specific transmission line rights-of-way in 2021.

The selective use of herbicides to manage vegetation along rights-of-way is done within the context of an Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) program consisting of mechanical, chemical, natural and cultural components. In right-of-way vegetation management the pest or target is vegetation (primarily tall growing) that will cause outages and safety issues. National Grid’s IVM program encourages natural controls by promoting low growing plant communities that resist invasion by target vegetation. The selective use of herbicides and mechanical controls are the direct techniques used to control target vegetation and help establish and maintain natural controls.

Rodeo, and possibly one of the following herbicides, Arsenal or Arsenal Powerline, will be applied directly to the surface of stumps immediately after target vegetation is cut (Cut Stump Treatment). Garlon 4 or Garlon 4 Ultra will be applied selectively to the stems of target vegetation using hand-held equipment (Basal Treatment and Dormant stem treatment). Krenite S or Rodeo, mixed with Escort XP, and one of the following herbicides, Arsenal or Arsenal Powerline, or Milestone will be applied selectively to the foliage of target vegetation using hand-held equipment (Foliar Treatment). Applications shall not commence more than ten days before nor conclude more than ten days after the following treatment periods. The herbicide mixes and additional information about rights of way management in Massachusetts can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/rights-of-way-vegetation-management>

Municipalities that have rights-of-way that were treated in 2020 but may require some touch-up work in 2021:

Ware

February 1, 2021 – May 30, 2021	May 30, 2021 - Oct 16, 2021	Oct 16, 2021 – Dec 31, 2021
CST	Foliar	CST
Basal	CST	Basal
Dormant Stem	Basal	Dormant Stem
	Cut stubble	

*The exact treatment dates are dependent upon weather conditions and field crew progress.

Further information may be requested by contacting (during business hours, Mon-Fri from 8:00 am-4:00 pm):
Mariclaire Rigby, National Grid, 939 Southbridge Street, Worcester, MA 01610.
Telephone: (508) 860-6282 or email: mariclaire.rigby@nationalgrid.com

EDITORIAL

More notice for Mary Lane’s proposed closure was needed

Baystate Health announced this week it will close the Mary Lane Outpatient Center, with the emergency satellite facility and the cancer services probably closing by June. Any other services will be phased out over the two-year period.

To say it came as a bit of shock – with a six-month timeframe for emergency services to figure out the logistics of providing ambulance service farther away for each and every shift – is an understatement.

Five years ago, Baystate Health petitioned the state Department of Public Health to change Mary Lane from a hospital to an outpatient center with its emergency room becoming a satellite emergency facility.

In those five years, they invested in a range of services at Mary Lane, from a new oncology department to partnership that provided wound care to bringing additional doctors’ offices to the campus. A new \$1 million pharmacy was also planned, but that is now a moot project. We commend them for putting their money in the center in the hopes it would grow services there.

Unfortunately, none of those services drew many patients, according to Baystate Health officials. In fact, they pointed to the fact that residents and officials wants Mary Lane to stay, yet the center isn’t where many in the area get their healthcare services.

Baystate Health Eastern Region President and Chief Operating Officer Molly Gray said 24 of 28 daily visitors to the emergency facility are presenting minor problems such as sprains. But what about the other four patients with more serious medical issues?

It is clearly worrisome to people like Ware Fire Chief Christopher Gagnon and West Brookfield Rescue Squad Director Dan McCall that they must now plan how to continue providing medical services to patients with no emergency facility close by. While Wing Hospital is “just nine miles up the road” that may prove a trip that some patients don’t successfully make. It’s not comforting for those who worry they or their loved ones will be one of those four patients with very serious issues, when every second counts.

We urge Baystate Health to help Ware and area towns to determine what can be done, if anything, to mitigate this issue. Whether it’s new equipment or additional operational monies to hire more staff for emergency medical services, or both, it should all be thoroughly discussed as the closure moves forward.

Baystate officials have said they may donate more to the Quaboag Connector, which provides low-cost rides to residents of eight Quaboag Hills towns, including Ware, and ask it to provide rides to Springfield to Baystate Medical Center. Their donations five years ago helped start the ride service that has been a huge help in getting residents to medical appointments, work and higher education.

Baystate’s theory is to provide those in Ware who have used the emergency facility, and the previous emergency room, as their doctor because they don’t have a primary care doctor, with transportation to Wing and help them develop relationships with primary care providers. We think it’s a wonderful theory if that’s what happens – but there have to be lots of conversations and plans about how to make it so. And hopefully, Baystate Health will tap the many groups in the community who have relationships with those potential patients to make sure it happens.

It is understood there were pressing business issues that led to this decision, but the community deserved more notice that Baystate was taking the closure road and hoping to end emergency services in Ware in a short period of time.

Yes, it would have meant more outcry and tumult for a longer period of time, but it would have given Ware and the surrounding towns more time to figure out the logistics. It’s not as if emergency medical services in our towns have unlimited resources; in fact, just the opposite is true. And it will take a great deal of planning to come up with logistics that work.

Our local representatives, State Sen. Anne Gobi, D-Spencer, and state representatives Todd Smola, R-Warren, and Donnie Berthiaume, R-Spencer, who were as surprised as everyone else, say they will be demanding answers and requesting the data on which the decisions were made.

As the state process to close Mary Lane moves forward, we urge Baystate Health to find ways to mitigate what will be a loss to the community and its residents, and a difficult situation for emergency medical services providers to maneuver.

Baystate Health showed they were willing to keep their word and invest in Mary Lane when it stopped being a hospital six years ago.

The community and its representatives should make it clear they expect Baystate Health to help them navigate this latest change.

Indoor seed sowing just like the pros do

My first experience with seed sowing involved an egg carton, some potting soil and a few marigold seeds.

I must have been about 10 years old. I can still recall how amazed I was that a live plant could grow from what appeared to be a dried up sliver of straw. I can even conjure up the smell of the moistened egg cartons if I think about it hard enough! Even more enthralling of a memory is the first harvest of flowers a couple of months after my offspring made its way out to the garden.

While it is still too early to start marigolds or even tomatoes indoors, it is the perfect time study up on the process so that you can be successful. Sure, it involves a bit more than an egg carton and a window sill, but out of it all you’ll be rewarded for your hard work with a bounty of blooms or a basket of vegetables or both. Here are a few pointers that I have gleaned from many seasons of starting seeds indoors.

The general idea is to provide a moist, warm environment for the seed to germinate and then a semi-warm, well-lit environment for the plant to grow on. Therefore, props are necessary components if you want to be successful. Previous articles have covered this

part of seed-starting in depth, but I’ll re-cap the highlights. Invest in some heat mats and set them at 70 degrees to provide bottom-heat.

As far as light goes, the window sill won’t cut it unless you are extremely diligent about turning the plants many times over the course of the day, and even then, “stretch” is likely to occur. Instead, adjust a “shop light” so that it can be raised and lowered easily. One cool fluorescent bulb and one warm are recommended but two cool work just fine in my experience. Forgo garden soil or even

regular potting soil in place of a finely milled seed-starting mix. Sterilize shallow containers of choice in a 10% bleach solution before using them.

Sow teenie seeds on the surface of moist starting mix; small seed can be sown in shallow furrows. Space as best you can by folding an index card, placing the seed in the fold and tapping the card with your finger. Larger seeds can be buried a quarter of an inch apart. Cover with a humidity dome or a clear plastic bag propped up like a tent and place on bottom heat. Mist the soil of surface-sown seeds occasionally. When thoroughly dry, soak the container in a few inches of water; it will absorb moisture like a sponge. Once germi-

nation occurs, remove the dome or bag and place the seedlings within a couple of inches of the shop light off of the heat mats. Adjust lights accordingly as growth occurs. Use liquid fertilizer at one-quarter to half-strength after a couple weeks and transplant into small, individual containers or cells after true leaves form.

Transplanted seedlings can happily grow under the lights until it approaches the time to plant them outdoors. About a week before Memorial Day, harden off heat lovers such as tomatoes, peppers, basil or marigolds. Place in a sheltered spot and gradually work up to more exposure until finally they are outdoors all day and all night. All of this work may seem like a lot, but the benefits to starting your own seedlings are many, the first of which is the endless number of varieties for sale as seeds versus those available as plants at your local nursery.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

ON THE GARDEN



Roberta McQuaid

GUEST COLUMN

Growing partisanship presents challenges

By Lee H. Hamilton
Guest columnist

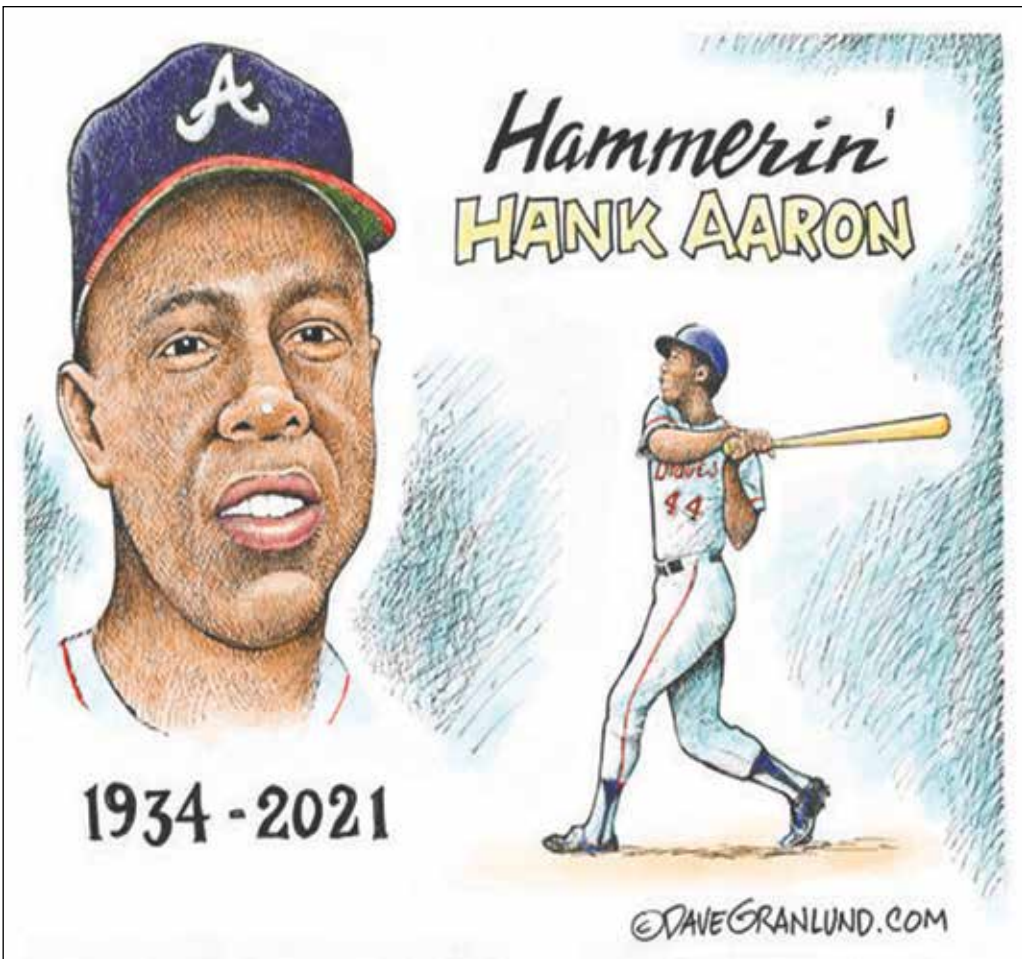
President Joe Biden took office vowing to bridge partisan differences and unite Americans. It will not be easy.

Biden will have to work with a Congress that is deeply divided, reflecting divisions among the American people that have grown stronger and more intense.

Beginning in the 1990s, we entered a period of protracted polarization. Political groups became more active, more aggressive in their public dialogue and more insistent in their policy preferences. Republicans are more consistently conservative; Democrats are more consistently liberal. Republicans accuse Democrats of being socialists and unpatriotic. Democrats accuse Republicans of being bigoted and chauvinistic.

Increasingly, each side tends to be suspicious of the other. They view their political adversaries as not just wrong, but as a threat to democracy or national security. They have sharply opposing views on the economy, climate change, racial justice, law enforcement and even whether the COVID-19 pandemic is real and serious.

Sometimes I think that Democrats and Republicans live in different worlds. They gravitate toward separate houses of worship, schools, neighborhoods, bars and restaurants, and vacation destinations. They consume different news media and watch different movies and television shows. They even purchase different food at the supermarket. They are less likely to have friends from the opposite party. I run across Democrats who do not want their children to marry a Republican, and vice versa. Republicans are more likely to live in rural areas than Democrats. Democrats are geographically more mobile and more likely to live in cities and suburbs. Republicans embrace traditional values and tend to identify their political views with Christianity. Democrats are often more socially liberal and less tied to traditional social values and religion.



These trends were noticeable during the presidency of Barack Obama, when the country seemed to move left on issues like abortion, same-sex marriage and addressing inequality. Donald Trump’s election reflected a reaction: Republicans became more conservative in some ways but also more willing to use government power to implement their policy preferences; a change from the past.

All of this, of course, makes the life of a politician challenging. The greater the polarization, the tougher it is to build consensus to solve problems.

However, the public clearly wants politicians to work together, to move beyond polarization, to cooperate and get things done. Surveys find that most voters want government to address the needs of all Americans, not just people like themselves. When officials say they are taking a bipartisan approach, the claim typically meets with approval.

Biden campaigned with a promise to “restore the soul of America.” He identifies himself as a moderate and seeks to govern from what he defines as the political center. For the most part, his cabinet choices tend to represent the moderate strain of the Democratic Party.

He has spent a lifetime in government, and he believes he can work across the aisle and advance bipartisanship and cooperation. He has some advantages in following Trump, who did not try to win over public opinion but catered to his political base.

Biden, of course, will not be able to do this on his own. He will need cooperation, from Republicans and from Democrats. Many people wish him well, but others will oppose his every move and try to defeat his program.

That is the way it is in our politics, a system that presents its challenges, but over the years has served us reasonably well.

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Should I Wait Until Age 70 To Claim?

By Russell Gloor

Dear Rusty: I have read your answers to the commonly asked question of “When should I claim social security benefits.” You always say one should wait as long as possible, up to age 70, to get the maximum monthly benefit. But I have not seen you address the matter of all the money you could have collected if you start drawing sooner and how many years it will take, if you wait, to recoup all that money.

I am now 64. I have always planned to wait until at least 66 and possibly to 70 to start collecting. I have no health issues and expect to live well into my 90s. When I tell people this, they question why I am leaving so much money on the table by waiting. At age 66 I’d get \$1,671 per month and, at 70, \$2,161. Between those two ages I could collect \$73,524. It will take me many years to recoup all that money if I wait until 70 to begin, right? When I consider this, I question why I am waiting. Please help clear up my confusion and tell me whether I am doing the right thing by waiting to claim. *Signed:*

Confused Senior

Dear Confused: You are correct that I always try to make people aware of their option to get a bigger Social Security benefit by waiting longer to claim. But I also always stress that the decision to do that should consider several things - most notably, current need for the money, health, and anticipated longevity. Said another way, delaying until age 70 doesn’t make much sense if you won’t live long enough to at least “break even.” Nevertheless, your point is very well taken – not a lot is written about benefits not taken when you wait until a later age to claim. I actually have written about that before, but I’m happy to evaluate your specific personal situation.

Using the numbers you provided, if you were to claim your \$1,671 benefit starting at your full retirement age (FRA) you would collect \$73,524 over the 44-month period to age 70, when you could get the \$2,161 benefit. So how long would it take to break even if you wait until age 70 to claim? Well, the difference between your age 70 benefit and your FRA benefit is \$490. So, if you wait and

get the higher benefit at age 70, it will take you about 12.5 years to recover that \$73,524 (\$73,524 divided by \$490 = 150 months = 12.5 years).

So, here’s where longevity comes in. According to Social Security, average longevity for a man your age today is about 84, so if you meet or exceed average longevity, you’ll collect more in cumulative lifetime benefits by waiting until age 70 to claim. And you’ll be getting that higher monthly benefit amount throughout your later years, a good way to offset inflation. Indeed, that higher benefit lasts for the rest of your life, and it also means a larger survivor benefit for your wife if you predecease her. As your widow, your wife will get 100% of the amount you are receiving when you pass, if she has reached her full retirement age and if her widow’s benefit is more than her own. And 100% of your age 70 benefit is quite a bit more than 100% of your earlier benefits.

I hope this helps clarify your confusion about whether to claim now, or at your FRA,

Please see **SSI**, page 5

WARE RIVER NEWS



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Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and “Your Turn” guest column between 500-800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamation of character.

Send opinions to:
Ware River News
Letter to the Editor
80 Main Street
Ware, MA 01082
or via email to:
ekennedy@turley.com

The deadline for submissions is Monday at noon.

2021Turley Election Policy

This newspaper will print free self-submitted statements of candidacy only four weeks or more out from the election. All candidates running in both contested and uncontested races are asked to submit their statements to the editor to include only biographical and campaign platform details. Total word count for statements is limited to between 300-500 words maximum. Please include a photo. We will not publish any statements of candidacy inside the four weeks from election threshold. To publish any other campaign publicity during the race, please contact our advertising representatives. We also do not allow personal attacks against other candidates or political parties in statements of candidacy, nor do we publish for free any information about key endorsements or political fundraisers.

Letters to the editor of no more than 250 words from supporters endorsing specific candidates or discussing campaign issues are limited to three total per author during the election season. No election letters will appear in the final edition before the election. We reserve the right to edit all statements of candidacy and letters to the editor to meet our guidelines.

Golf outing helps area veterans, military families

WARE — Sponsors and golfers are needed for a May 7 golf outing that will benefit area veterans and military families. The Operation Soaring Eagle Golf Tournament will be held May 7 at the Heritage Country Club in Charlton and will benefit The Brookfield Institute, a nonprofit that builds resilience in veterans and military families in order to aggressively combat the causes and impacts of veteran suicide. Registration is now open for golfers. The outing costs \$125 per person and includes 18 holes in a scramble format with a shotgun start, awards and a steak dinner. The outing is for ages 21 and older. Sponsorships of all levels are still available, ranging from the tournament sponsor to hole sponsors. Sponsor benefits include golfing, recognition on banners,

signs and websites and in media announcements and advertising. “We’re excited to help people get to know The Brookfield Institute and its mission and that includes reaching out to different interest groups,” said Jennifer Baublitz, executive director. “This is our first event for golfers and was suggested by a board member who recognizes the need to widen our outreach. The golf outing will begin Friday, May 7, at 9 a.m., with a cocktail hour at 3 p.m., followed by the steak dinner and awards. The Heritage Country Club is at 85 Sampson Road in Charlton. To become a sponsor for the Operation Soaring Eagle Golf Tournament, contact Beverly Prestwood-Taylor, beverly@brookfieldinstitute.org, 508-784-1546. To register golfers, go to www.brookfieldinstitute.org.

Town is asking businesses to take facade survey

Interest in commercial facade grants to be determined

WARE – The town of Ware, through the Community Development Authority, is working with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to pursue funding from the state’s Community Development Block Grant in the upcoming year. If successful, one potential use of state grant funds would be to establish a Façade/Signage Improvement Program for downtown buildings in downtown Ware. This program would provide grants and/or low-interest loans

to assist business operators and commercial building owners with exterior improvement projects. Some of these projects can include improvements to signage, lighting, doorways, siding and other exterior features. As a downtown commercial property owner or business operator, the town is asking for businesses’ assistance in measuring interest in this potential program, and in helping the town to fine-tune its parameters. Please complete the survey, which can be found online at www.surveymonkey.com/r/FacadeImprovement. Anyone who has questions regarding the survey, should feel free to contact PVPC Community Development Planner Nick Peavy at 413-781-6045.

Tri-Parish Community Church news

NEW BRAINTREE — “It’s so good to be in church,” was a remark heard recently on a Sunday in the Tri-Parish Community Church in New Braintree. COVID-19 does seem to be making us feel like prisoners in our own homes; but, this past Sunday, Jan. 24, almost a baker’s dozen of hardy souls braved the biting cold to worship at the New Braintree Congregational Church. The service was led by Deacon Jennifer Pollard and the topic, “Answering the call.” Next Sunday, Jan. 31, the service will be led by Deacon Marguerite Crevier at 10 a.m. in the New Braintree Congregational Church.

Social distancing is easy and we are almost getting used to masks. And, by the way, has anyone noticed the new portable sign on the church lawn – large four-inch letters making it easier to read it and it can travel to the three churches as they are rotated. And, one more thing, coming up in February, we will be welcoming back the Rev. Kathleen Fitzgibbons to lead the services on Feb. 7 and 21. All are welcome. Lastly, do not forget the annual business meeting to be held on Feb. 7 after the worship service at the New Braintree Congregational Church – it is important.

CAMPOUT from page 2

tasty food out of the camp kitchen. “Each meal was amazing but two Scouts finished up Sunday morning with a “train wreck,” a one-pot meal of scrambled eggs and four types of breakfast meats,” said Pelletier-Biggs. “Given the challenges of the pandemic, this group of scouts and leaders are committed to experience Scouting. They accept the limits, but find every opportunity to be Scouts and be active” said Flynn. “We are proud of them participating in this event offered from another state. Hopefully next year, things are back to normal and we are back at Treasure Valley Scout Reservation in Rutland once again.”



Scouts set up their tents during the combined virtual Klondike Derby and the troop’s annual

\$12.50 Each

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Ware River News

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Readers, local merchants, institutions, municipalities, non-profit groups, and civic organizations are strongly encouraged to send us their hometown news and photos.

- News items and press releases should be sent in an email to the news editor at ekennedy@turley.com as either an MS Word document attachment saved as text only, or pasted directly into your email message screen. Be sure to include who, what,

when, where and why in the submission, preferably written in the third person unless it is a first person letter to the editor or guest column.

- Please send photo captions identifying all subjects in your image(s) from left to right. We need first and last name, hometown, title, if applicable, and a brief description of what subjects are doing in the photo.
- Email uncorrected, raw, RGB color digital photos at highest resolution direct-

ly off your camera, or sized at least 20 inches wide at 72 resolution, 10 inches wide at 200 resolution. They may be emailed as attachments to ekennedy@turley.com.

- Publicity chairpersons are encouraged to send in news about upcoming fundraising or other calendar events at least three weeks before they take place.

We will respond to all email messages received.

If you don’t have e-mail, please mail these materials to:

80 Main Street, Ware MA 01082

Sides differ over clearcutting area woods

By Kimberly Palmucci
Correspondent

Several local residents have raised concerns over the clear-cutting of state forests, including Herman Covey Wildlife Management Area in Belchertown, Muddy Brook Wildlife Management Area in Hardwick, and others. “Most Massachusetts citizens believe that the green areas on maps locate beautiful and fully protected public natural areas. They are mistaken,” said Chris Matera, of Massachusetts Forest Watch. “Essentially zero of our state public lands (12% of Massachusetts land area) are permanently and legally protected from commercial extraction.” The Massachusetts Forest Watch group formed in response to public outrage over “logging and clearcutting” of state forests. Matera said logging, including much clearcutting, is “increasingly occurring on Massachusetts state public forests, drinking watershed, and wildlife protection forests.”

Why they’re important

“State public forests hold Massachusetts’s most important and unfragmented forests and they provide an incredible amount of public good, including carbon capture and storage, clean air and water, flood control, undisturbed wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, spiritual refuge, tourism attraction, among other benefits,” Matera said. “However, at the exact moment in history that we are coming to a greater realization about the importance of protecting forests, our state public forest treasure is being increasingly targeted for commercial extraction by timber and biomass interests.” At Muddy Brook in Hardwick, the state’s Division of Fisheries and Wildlife said it has completed the first phase of a 500-acre barrens wildlife habitat restoration project. Habitat management actions took place on 375 acres in the Muddy Brook Wildlife Management Area, and 125 acres of the adjacent Muddy Brook Wildlife Conservation Easement, owned by the New England Forestry Foundation in Hardwick. “We are excited to partner with MassWildlife on an ecological restoration effort which supports multiple rare and common wildlife



At Muddy Brook Wildlife Management Area in Hardwick, tree cutting is happening as the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife works to restore a 500-acre pine barrens wildlife habitat.

and plant species,” New England Forestry Foundation Executive Director Bob Perschel said in a statement. “It’s a good example of how organizations can work together to achieve common conservation goals that benefit people, wildlife, and the diverse forest communities in which they live.” The greater Muddy Brook Valley represents an important and rare collection of fire-influenced barrens habitat communities in Massachusetts, MassWildlife asserts. According to its section on mass.gov, restoring barrens is “critical to conserving the distinct plants, insects, and animals—including 75 species on the Massachusetts Endangered Species List—that depend on these uncommon habitats.” According to the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife officials, over the past six years, the tree canopy has been thinned to reduce high fuel loads and to stimulate growth of barrens plants. “The site may look bare following initial restoration work,” said John Scanlon, MassWildlife’s Habitat program manager. “However, in a relatively short period of time, the cut and burned areas will be covered with sprouting native plants and tree seedlings. The reestablishment of this barrens habitat provides the necessary food, cover, and homes for both common and rare animals and pollinators that require this special type of habitat.” Matera is having none of it. He said that’s just another



The state is in the process of restoring a 500-acre pine barrens wildlife habitat in the Muddy Brook Wildlife Management Area in Hardwick.

example of “excuses” used by state agencies to cut down state forests and “nonsense meant to confuse the public in order to support bigger bureaucratic budgets and private industry profits.” Private versus public sources “There is no need to log our state public forests and many reasons not to,” Matera said. “Private lands provide the vast majority of our wood use. Almost always, the best we humans can do for forest ‘health,’ to benefit wildlife, and to help nature in general is

to stop pretending such destructive ‘chainsaw medicine’ helps the forest and leave the forest in peace.” Matera said that a bill will be introduced this year in the Legislature to stop commercial logging on state public lands—the 2021 version of House Bill 897, an act relative to forest protection. “Contact your representative and ask them to co-sponsor the 2021 version of House Bill 897 when it is introduced this year,” he said. “We need forests, but they do not need us, that is self-evident.” To learn more, go to maforests.org.

SSI from page 4

or to wait even longer to age 70. Here is a link to an article I previously published on this topic:www.socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-doing-a-breakeven-analysis/. But from what you’ve shared with me, I don’t see anything wrong with your plan to continue waiting until at least your FRA, and possibly until age 70, to claim, especially

since you expect to live well into your 90s. This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association.

NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org)

dation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisors@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Gather a harvest

5. Federal Republic of Germany

8. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!

11. “The Little Mermaid”

13. The common gibbon

14. Volcanic island in Fiji

15. Mother of Perseus

16. Egg cells

17. Teams’ best pitchers

18. Credit associations

20. Advance

21. Hair styling products

22. Benign tumors

25. Arriving early

30. Called it a career

31. ___ Paulo, city

32. Avoid with trickery

33. Easter egg

38. Veterans battleground

41. Lack of success

43. Thing that causes disgust

45. Deep, continuing

sound

47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea

49. You might put it in a fire

50. Partner to “oohed”

55. Actor Idris

56. Slippery

57. Plant of the bean family

59. One point north of northeast

60. Patti Hearst’s captors

61. Places to hang clothes

62. Midwife

63. Of she

64. S. Korean statesman

CLUES DOWN

1. Cool!

2. Amounts of time

3. Aboriginal people of Japan

4. Popular veggies

5. Wedding accessory

6. Deep, narrow gorges

7. Dry cereal

8. Competitions that require speed

9. Cain and ___

10. Snake sound

12. Type of amino acid (abbr.)

14. Pattern of notes in Indian music

19. Satisfy

23. Misfire

24. Nearsightedness

25. Indicates before

26. Increase motor speed

27. When you hope to get there

28. Indicates position

29. Where rockers perform

34. Substitute

35. ___ juris: of one’s own right

36. Earliest form of

modern human in Europe: ___-magnon

37. Adult female bird

39. Do away with

40. Lens

41. Flattened appendage

42. Post or pillar in Greek temple

44. A medieval citizen of Hungary

45. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation

46. Abba ___ Israeli politician

47. Sew

48. Evergreen trees and shrubs having oily one-seeded fruits

51. Swiss river

52. Grayish-white

53. A way to illustrate

54. College basketball superpower

58. Midway between south and southeast

Preparing to fight COVID-19



Cedarbrook Village resident Ethel Ambach was among the 75 residents and staff to be vaccinated for COVID-19 this week.



Eileen Kot received her COVID-19 at Cedarbrook Village on Monday, commenting on how quickly it was administered.

Turley Publications staff photos by Melina Bourdeau



In the Memorycare unit in Cedarbrook Village, resident Shirley Ratcliffe received her COVID-19 vaccine.



Jenny Kapinos received her COVID-19 vaccine on Monday.

MLH from page 1

as to whether Baystate’s plan will be approved. “We’re also planning to have a virtual town hall in the next few weeks,” Keroack said. Baystate Wing would consolidate Mary Lane, which Gray said has been “fit tested.” “We have a new emergency service here at Wing and there is space to accommodate all the visits that are happening in the Eastern Region and have additional growth if need be,” said Gray. “When we talk about this taking a period of time over two to three years, we are going to be relocating the services we provide at Mary Lane to Wing Hospital and that will require an investment in construction and expansion.” Keroack said Baystate would spend about \$10 to \$15 million investment to “refurbish, upgrade and expand that facility.” Keroack said Baystate would be in conversation with Ware officials about the site’s fate. “We certainly would be willing to demolish the existing building if there is no use for it and gift the land to the town as green space,” said Keroack. He added that if the town had use for the building, Baystate would leave it. Gray and Keroack said the 80 Mary Lane employees would continue to be employed by Baystate at other locations. To address the need for transportation in the area, Keroack said Baystate has “really thought through the issue.” “We already were funding the Quaboag Connector which provides about 1,000 rides per month in the Quaboag Valley towns, particularly between Palmer and Ware for appointments,” he said. “We’re likely going to need to expand those services and include occasional trips to Springfield because cancer patients will be able to get some kind of treatment at Wing, but the more elaborate kinds of treatments would require a trip to Springfield.”

Community members react

Keroack said the closure of the hospital is “going to be a blow to the town beyond the healthcare side of things.” But it’s also means a change in how emergency services are delivered before a patient gets to a hospital. “I really wish there was more planning before they dropped this on us,” said Fire Chief Christopher Gagnon. With the emergency satellite facility closing in approximately six months, Gagnon said it doesn’t give the Ware Fire Department much time to plan for how to deal with the change. Ambulances will be out of ser-



The original Mary Lane Hospital building.

vice for longer times as trips will always to be to Palmer or Springfield instead of to Mary Lane. “Our ability to respond to multiple calls quickly is now vastly diminished,” Gagnon said. “We’ve had the luxury of being able to turn our trucks around quickly, but we’ll lose that,” he said. Gagnon said he is also worried about having to call in additional manpower on overtime when multiple medical calls come in while one ambulance is already in Palmer or beyond. “There will also be more wear and tear on our vehicles,” he said, with each trip being out-of-town. “The overall impact is going to be a huge logistical change,” he said. “But we’ll have to learn to adjust. It’s a real disappointment to us.” He’s not alone in believing it will be a difficult transition. West Brookfield Rescue Squad President Daniel McCall said Mary Lane’s closure will have a “profound effect on us and our community as a whole, even down to the level of service we provide patients.” Currently patients serviced by the West Brookfield Rescue have a six-minute ride to Mary Lane and up to 30 minutes to either Wing or Harrington Hospital, McCall said. Of the 1,100 transports WBRS does in a year, about half of the patients go to Mary Lane. “We’re going to have go up a level of service and provide more advanced critical care for residents because we will have a longer transport time,” he said. “There will also be an economic impact on what we do because when have a sick patient in the ambulance for a longer time, you’ll have to deliver more care.” McCall said he felt the decision was unfortunate and will “flip (EMS) on its head.”

Elected officials react

“I am deeply saddened by the news of the impending closure of the Baystate Mary Lane Satellite Center,” said SelectBoard member Nancy Talbot, who was also a member of the group that tried to fight the previous changes. “I realized, several years ago as a committee member, as I testified in Boston at a Department of Public Health hearing, this would come to fruition eventually.” She said the communities of Ware, Barre, Belchertown, all of the Brookfields, Hardwick and Warren will find it difficult to adjust. “Change however is not always disastrous, rather it allows for other possibilities,” she said. “Baystate Health officials have spent a lot of their money to upgrade many of the buildings since they first purchased it and most recently in renovations to several areas of the facility in Ware. It would be shameful to not work with town officials for the utmost potential and reuse of this site. The possibilities may be endless and suitable, if we work together to see this happen.” She said she was heartened that Baystate was committing to transportation, and said the town has to hold the company to their promises of providing more access to primary care for patients. Ware SelectBoard Chairman Alan Whitney also said he was not surprised, but he was disappointed. His two big worries are the town possibly being saddled with an old, specialized building no one wants that it has to demolish, and the effect on the town’s ambulance service. “The last thing the town needs is a big, abandoned Scooby Doo haunted house the town has to pay to bring down,” he said, pointing to the difficulties in getting Main Street buildings in poor condition pulled down. Whitney also said there will be ripple effects from the closure with longer trips necessary to provide medical care and transport, not just in Ware, but in surrounding towns. And they aren’t the only ones disappointed. “It’s certainly a surprise and it’s a disappointment. We’re not going to leave at this,” said State Rep. Todd Smola. “They say the people just aren’t coming to Mary Lane, and we want to know exactly how they reached this conclusion. It’s so sudden, and none of us had any knowledge this was coming.” Smola said he, State Rep. Donnie Berthiaume, R-Spencer, and State Sen. Anne Gobi, D-Spencer, were all informed Tuesday morning by Baystate Health officials that the closure was planned. The legislative delegation wants to meet with Baystate Health officials and town officials, he said. “We want to hear very specifically how they reached these conclusions,” Smola said. He pointed to how hard citizens in the town fought to keep the hospital open as much as possible in 2016, when Baystate Health changed Mary Lane’s ER to a satellite emergency facility and close its in-patient beds. Sen. Anne Gobi (D-Spencer) said the decision “blindsided” her and other elected officials, adding the decision was very upsetting and handled unprofessionally by Baystate Health. She said the closure was similar to events five years ago when Mary Lane in-patient services were closed.

“We went through an awful lot five years ago,” she said, “Baystate is doing a great disservice to the community. It blindsided me and other legislators, we had previously heard rumors, but I did not get a call from Baystate until today.” Gobi said she thought Baystate would have learned from “five years ago, and how poorly they handled things then. You would think they would have made a few adjustments.” She felt the closure of the outpatient center is “horrible,” and “like a slap in the face.” “We’re still in a pandemic and this is when they choose to shut down services at a time when they should be bending over backwards to help people,” Gobi said. “I’m not pleased.”

A possible positive

“It’s really sad; it’s a shock,” said Tracy Opalinski, who worked to keep Mary Lane open as a hospital in 2016, and said there were no prior discussions with the town or major donors about these plans. “They were investing significantly with Healogics’ wound care center, and a \$1 million pharmacy, which was delayed by COVID, but was supposed to go in,” she said, as well as the radiology upgrade and enhanced oncology department. Despite her anger and disappointment, she hopes something positive can come out of the situation. “The times are changing, but change doesn’t always have to be something bad,” she said. Something positive could go on the site, whether it was a health clinic or some other project. Bob Kelley, in-house counsel for Optimus Living, the owner of Cedarbrook Village, the large assisted living facility built next to the hospital, said the company was very surprised by the move. He said the company plans to have a collaborative relationship with Baystate Health, whether its closest facility is at Mary Lane or in Palmer. But he also said Optimus Living or another company might see the property as “a good place for an anchor residence with market-rate housing.” He said he believes Baystate will do the right thing by winding down the campus with dignity, and he understands Mary Lane is a very old building that would be difficult to update. For more information, Baystate has launched a website specifically about the eastern region at <https://www.baystatehealth.org/easternregion>. Staff writer Eileen Kennedy contributed to this story.

Dioguardi jewelers

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FEBRUARY 13TH 2021

RAFFLE

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Win this beautiful
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By mailing a check payable to QHCC, 3 Converse Street, Palmer, MA 01069
or pay online by visiting <https://quaboaghillschamber.chambermaster.com/eventregistration/register>

Proceeds to benefit Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce. QHCC is an non-profit organization that encompasses the towns of Belchertown, Brimfield, Brimfield, Brookfield, East Brookfield, (Gilbertville) Hardwick, Holland, Monson, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Palmer, Spencer, Wales, Ware, Warren, West Brookfield & West Warren.

BUY DIRECT AND SAVE \$\$\$		CUSTOMER PICK OF THE WEEK	
USDA INSP. FROZEN BONE-IN BONE-IN PORK LOIN END CHOPS.....	99¢ lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF RIBEYE CUT FREE	\$6⁹⁹ lb
USDA INSP. FRESH PORK SIRLOIN CUTLETS	\$1⁷⁷ lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN BONELESS & SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST TRAY PAK	88¢ lb
USDA INSP. FRESH STORE MADE BONELESS PORKLOIN STUFFED CHOP or ROAST	\$2⁴⁴ lb	USDA INSP. IQF FRESH CHICKEN THIGH BONE-IN 10 LB BAG	66¢ lb
USDA INSP. TURKEY BREAST	\$3⁹⁹ lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN CHICKEN LEG 1/4s 10 LB BAG	\$2⁹⁹ ea
IT'S SOUP TIME		USDA INSP. FRESH AMERICAN LAMB SHOULDER CHOPS	\$3⁹⁹ lb
USDA INSP. FRESH BEEF SHANKS.....	\$3⁹⁹ lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN GOURMET SLICED WHITE BREAD 16 OZ LOAF	99¢ ea
USDA INSP. FROZEN CHICKEN FEET	\$2⁴⁹ lb	90 Meat Outlet 90 Avocado St. Springfield 413-737-1288 www.90meat.com	
USDA INSP. FRESH SOUP CHICKEN (FOWL)	\$1¹⁹ lb	We reserve the right to limit quantities.	
SALE DATES: 1/28/21 - 2/3/21		HOURS: Mon. - Wed. 8-4 Thurs. 8-6 • Fri. 8-6 • Sat. 8-3	

SPORTS



Amelia Bonnayer eyes the basket to take a shot.



Aidynd Welsh makes her way down the court for Ware.



WARE – Last week, the Ware High School girls basketball team finally returned to action, and the offense was on fire in a 64-29 win over visiting Hampden Charter. Aidyn Welsh led the way with 20 points. Audrey LaValley had 13 points, while Amielia Bonnayer and Lexie Orszulak had 10 points each.

Chelsea Orszulak extends for a shot.

Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Lexie Orszulak heads down the right side of the court to start a play.



Olivia Vadnais makes a rush for the hoop.

Panthers return to action

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BARRE — The first meeting of the regular season between the Fitchburg and Quabbin boys basketball teams was a close affair during the first three quarters.

The Quabbin Panthers dominated the final eight minutes of the Central Mass. Pod 6 contest leading to a 49-34 home victory over the Red Raiders, last Monday night, Jan. 18.

“We shot the ball a lot better and we didn’t have as many turnovers in the fourth quarter,” said Quabbin head coach Dennis Dextradeur. “This is a milestone victory for us over a Division 1 program.”

Prior to last Monday night’s game, Quabbin had never defeated Fitchburg in a regular season game. It also marked the first time that the Red Raiders made a visit to the Panthers gymnasium.

“We’ve never beaten Fitchburg before tonight’s game,” Dextradeur added. “We now have to play them again on Thursday night. I’m sure they’ll be a much different team on their home court.”

That was certainly the case, as Quabbin, who had a 3-0 record following the home victory, suffered a 61-44 loss at Fitchburg three days later. The Panthers only double-digit scorer in the second meeting against the Red Raiders (1-3) was junior Connor Geary with 19 points.

Geary also led the way offensively in the first meeting between the two squads. He scored 10 of his game-high 17 points during the third quarter.

“Connor Geary is an explo-

Please see **PANTHERS**, page 8

Region’s winter sports begin

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – Winter sports, however abbreviated, have begun for several schools in Western and Central Massachusetts.

While Quabbin got off to a start a bit earlier, several Western Mass. teams caught up with game action beginning last Thursday

evening.

Ludlow, Amherst, Agawam, Ware, and Hampden Charter School of Science were all in action with girls and boys basketball.

Hockey also got in on the action over the weekend, though not all of the hockey teams were involved with some schools opting not to participate in the sport.

Chicopee, Chicopee Comprehensive, and Minnechaug, along with Pathfinder and Palmer, were scheduled to get involved on the action earlier this week, with the game action starting to pick up and teams attempting to play 10 to 12 games during the next five or six weeks, which is what is left of the winter season.

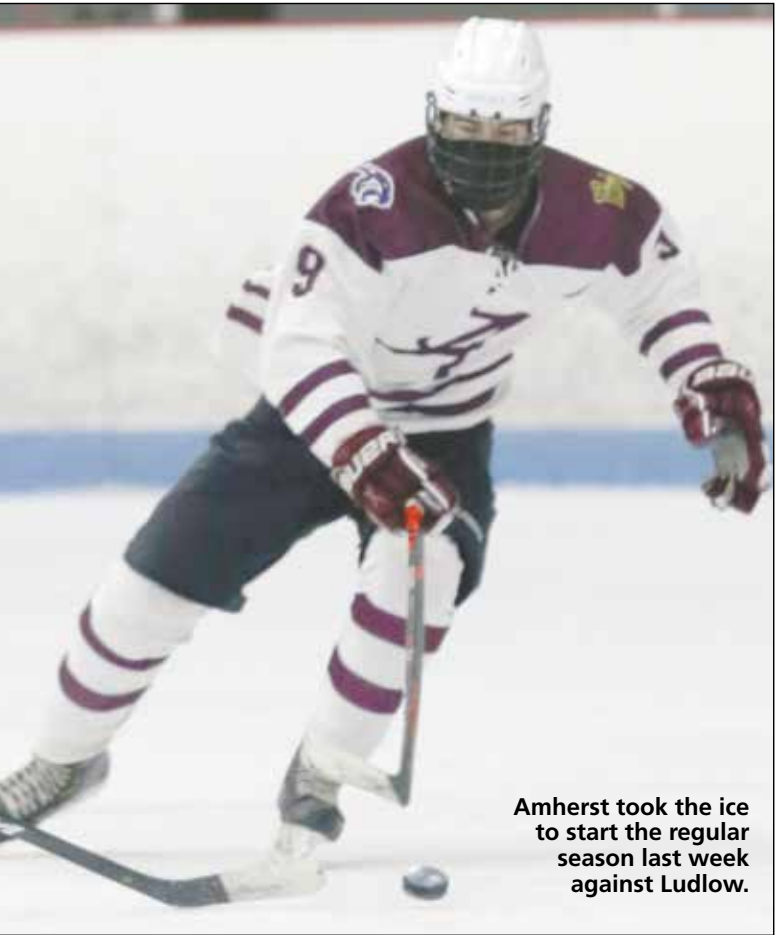
Agawam is scheduled to be in a bubble west of the Connecticut River, including Westfield and West Springfield.

Amherst will matchup with Ludlow, among other teams, and Ware and Hampden Charter mixed up last week, and Ware is set to take on Palmer and Pathfinder in the coming weeks.

Minnechaug and Chicopee Comprehensive are set to match up next week as well. East Longmeadow will also join the mix in that bubble.

In hockey action, Ludlow and Amherst had their first games of the regular season. Ludlow, Agawam, Minnechaug, and other Berry Division teams will be part of a league in the coming season. Most of the teams in that league play their home games at Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield.

Action at Olympia Ice Center last Saturday included Ludlow and Amherst as well as East Longmeadow and Agawam. All players were observing changes in protocol by changing into uniforms and gear in parking lots. Temperatures were cold with an even colder wind chill



Amherst took the ice to start the regular season last week against Ludlow.



Photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com

There is limited action in the region with some schools opting out of the winter season.

on Saturday. Players were only allowed to put skates on once inside the arena. The small number of fans allowed to attend games

Please see **WINTER**, page 8

Entry forms now available for the Thompson 300

WATERBURY, Conn. — The American-Canadian Tour (ACT) and Pro All Stars Series (PASS) have released the official entry form for the Thompson 300 at Connecticut’s Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park on Oct. 9 and 10. More than \$100,000 in projected awards are posted for the return of the historic event as part of the 59th World Series of Speedway Racing.

As previously announced, the 300-lap event will pay the winner a guaranteed minimum of \$20,000. Second place receives \$7,500 with \$5,000 for third. Everyone who takes the green flag will bring home at least \$1,200. Thirty-six starting positions have been posted with a total of \$85,475 in base purse money.

Lap money is also up for grabs. Every lap sold will award \$50 to the driver who leads that lap. This means up to \$15,000 in lap money and the Thompson 300 winner could pocket up to \$35,000 total.

A Last Chance “B” Feature has been posted as well. This final round qualifier will pay \$1,000 to win and \$250 to start for teams that do not transfer into the Thompson 300.

“The Thompson 300 is one of the most famous events in Modified racing,” ACT managing partner Cris Michaud said. “When Tom Mayberry and I reached out agreement to promote events at Thompson Speedway, Tom’s first idea was to bring back the Thompson 300. Together, we’ve put a lot of work into figuring out how to make it happen. We’re already excited even with the date still nearly nine months away. It’s going to be a must-see event this year and hopefully for years to come.”

The entry form has been posted at www.acttour.com/out-law-open-modifieds and www.proallstarseries.com. Teams that

Please see **RACING**, page 8



Submitted photo

The Thompson 300 will take place in October at Thompson Speedway.



public safety

Warren Police Log

Sunday, Jan. 17 12:38 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Gilbert Road – Written Warning 6:19 p.m. Sick/Unknown Southbridge Road – Transported to Hospital	Wednesday, Jan. 20 4:40 a.m. Breathing Difficulty Old West Warren Road – Transported to Hospital 5:33 p.m. Overdose/Poisoning Main Street – Transported to Hospital	Vehicle Summons: Ivanna Alcantara, 25, Milford, DE Number Plate Violation to Conceal ID; Uninsured Motor Vehicle; Unregistered Motor Vehicle 11:48 a.m. Harassment Old West Brookfield Road – Report Filed 12:24 p.m. Sick/Unknown Brimfield Road – Transported to Hospital 6:03 p.m. Harassment Milton O. Fountain Way – Officer Spoke to Party 8:14 p.m. Erratic Operator Southbridge Road – Citation Issued
Monday, Jan. 18 5:01 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop South Street – Written Warning 5:53 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Written Warning 8:13 p.m. Breathing Difficulty Mechanic Street – Transported to Hospital	Thursday, Jan. 21 12:22 a.m. Parking Violation North Street – Citation Issued 6:32 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Boston Post Road – Criminal Complaint Summons: Joseph W. Turner, 51, West Springfield License Suspended, Operate Motor Vehicle With; Number Plate Violation to Conceal ID; Unregistered Motor Vehicle 1:27 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Vehicle Towed Summons: Shawn P. McCarthy-Bates, 30, Ludlow Unlicensed Operation of Motor Vehicle; Inspection/Sticker, No 1:45 p.m. Fraud/Forgery North Street – Officer Spoke to Party	Saturday, Jan. 23 6:10 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Southbridge Road – Citation Issued 10:55 a.m. Serve Warrant Main Street – Arrest(s) Made Arrest: Brian W. Odell, 46, Warren Warrant 4:27 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Southbridge Road – Citation Issued 4:54 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Southbridge Road – Citation Issued 5:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Southbridge Road Extension – Citation Issued
Tuesday, Jan. 19 1:18 a.m. Fire, Mutual Aid Worcester Fire Headquarters – Services Rendered 11:01 a.m. Safety Concern Reed Street – Officer Spoke to Party 11:18 a.m. Fraud/Forgery Southbridge Road – Officer Advised 6:37 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Citation Issued 8:27 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Written Warning 8:47 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Vehicle Towed Summons: Tracy M. Hubbard, 55, West Warren Registration Revoked, Operate Motor Vehicle With; Uninsured Motor Vehicle	Friday, Jan. 22 10:53 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Southbridge Road – Criminal Complaint Summons: Joshua Alcantara, 18, Bronx, NY Number Plate Violation to Conceal ID; Uninsured Motor Vehicle; Unregistered Motor	

Hardwick Police Log

<i>For the week of Jan. 18-25, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department conducted 95 building/property checks, six emergency 911 calls, 13 radar assignments, 32 directed/area patrols, one motor vehicle accident, one illegal dumping, one trespass, one scam, one safety hazard, 11 traffic controls and 64 motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.</i>	Tuesday, Jan. 19 7:12 a.m. 911 – Misdiagonal Ruggles Hill Road – Call Cancelled 1:34 p.m. 911 – Medical Emergency Main Street – Services Rendered 2:15 p.m. Initiated – Illegal Dumping Railroad Lane – Could Not Locate 4:15 p.m. Initiated – Investigation Collins Road – Services Rendered 7:45 p.m. Phone – Investigation Ruggles Street – Investigated	Ruggles Hill Road – Officer Handled 4:02 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Lower Road – Written Warning
Monday, Jan. 18 2:29 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Written Warning 2:39 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Citation Issued 3:12 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Written Warning 3:20 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Citation Issued 4:27 p.m. Phone – Medical Emergency New Braintree Road – Transported to Hospital 4:54 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Written Warning 5:23 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Citation Issued	Wednesday, Jan. 20 12:22 p.m. Phone – Trespass Old Greenwich Plains Road – Negative Contact 3:55 p.m. 911 – Misdiagonal Old Petersham Road – Officer Handled 4:36 p.m. Phone – Motor Vehicle Stop Lower Road – Citation Issued	Friday, Jan. 22 6:27 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Written Warning 7:18 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Written Warning 8:49 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Bridge Street – Citation Issued 9:32 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Written Warning
	Thursday, Jan. 21 12:01 a.m. Phone – Medical Emergency Main Street – Services Rendered 11:48 a.m. 911 – Safety Hazard Hardwick Road – Taken/Referred to Other Agency 3:25 p.m. Initiated – Scam	Saturday, Jan. 23 10:30 a.m. 911 – Motor Vehicle Accident Hardwick Road – Report Taken
		Sunday, Jan. 24 9:49 a.m. Phone – Safety Hazard Muddy Brook Road – Taken/Referred to Other Agency
		Monday, Jan. 25 2:42 a.m. 911 – Medical Emergency Hardwick Road – Transported to Hospital

New Braintree Police Log

<i>For the week of Jan. 18-25, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department conducted 22 building/property checks, seven radar assignments, five motor vehicle stop, 26 directed/area patrols, seven traffic controls and two emergency 911 calls in the town of New Braintree.</i>	Monday, Jan. 18 8:44 a.m. Phone – Alarm Memorial Drive – Building Checked/Secured	Harrington Road – Gone On Arrival 5:22 p.m. 911 – Misdiagonal Scott Road – Services Rendered
	Thursday, Jan. 21 10:24 a.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Investigation Old Wine Road – Arrest(s) Made 4:58 p.m. Initiated – Complaint	Saturday, Jan. 23 5:09 p.m. 911 – Medical Emergency Letendre Lane – Transported to Hospital

Robert Paul Chartier, 87



WARE – Robert P. Chartier, 87, of Ware, passed away on Friday, Jan. 22, 2021 at Baystate Mary Lane Hospital.



He leaves behind those he cherished so deeply, including his wife, Annette M. (Dansereau) Chartier, of Ware, his daughter, Sharon R. Simpkins, and her husband, Robert, of Palmer, his sons, David R. Chartier, and his wife, Maryann, of Colorado Springs, Colorado, Mark A. Chartier, and his wife, Luisa, of Athol, and Donald R. Chartier, and his wife, Brenda, of West Brookfield; four grandchildren, Jennifer Foley, and her husband, James, of Palmer, Christopher Simpkins, and his wife, Abby Terhune, of Charlotte, North Carolina, Jessica Chartier, of Palmer, and Amanda Motta, and her husband, Antone, of Warren; five great-grandchildren, Davian and Christian Motta, Jameson and Lillian Foley, and Colin Dillera; as well as several nieces and nephews. Robert was predeceased by his sisters, Doris Fournier, Lorraine LaChance and Lillian St. Sauveur. He was born in Hoosick Falls, New York, son of the late George P. and Mary Jane (Marshall) Chartier.

Death notice

Chartier, Robert P.
Died: Jan. 22, 2021
Funeral Mass: Jan. 28
All Saints Church
Ware

Robert was a machinist at Warren Pumps before retiring in 1999. He was an amateur radio enthusiast and was a member of the former Mount Carmel Church and All Saints Church. Robert was a veteran of the United States Air Force, serving in the Korean War. He was a member of the American Legion Post #123 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #2577. A funeral Mass for Robert was held on Thursday, Jan. 28, 2021 in the All Saints Church, 17 North St., in Ware. A calling hour was held prior to the Mass from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Charbonneau Funeral Home, 30 Pleasant St., in Ware. Burial with military honors was in Mount Carmel Cemetery, on Greenwich Road in Ware following funeral Mass. Masks must be worn and social distancing guidelines must be followed while at the funeral home, the church, and the cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital, New England Office, 313 Washington Street, Suite 310, Newton, MA 02458. An online guest book is available at charbonneaufh.com.

Ware River News

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries

should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.



CHURCH DIRECTORY

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
“An Open and Welcoming Faith Community”
Park & Pleasant Streets
P.O. Box 447, Ware, Massachusetts 01082
413-967-6100 trinityware.org
Jubilee Cupboard – 967-3274
The Rev. Mary E. Rosendale
D.D. - Bishop Episcopal Diocese Western Massachusetts
Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 10am-2pm and by appt. Please call the cell number: 413-687-5568

SUNDAY SCHEDULE
Holy Eucharist at 10 a.m., Children's Chapel 9:30 a.m.
“You don't have to be Episcopal to share the Word and Fellowship of the Spirit” No matter who you are or where you have been, You are welcome.

THE JUBILEE CUPBOARD provides emergency food assistance and is open Thursday from 9 AM until noon. The location is next door to Trinity Church directly behind the Old Ware Fire Station. Please phone 413-967-3274. Donations of non-perishable food are welcomed by The Jubilee Cupboard during open hours only or make arrangements for pickup. Food may also be donated to The Jubilee Cupboard at a drop off box at the Big Y Supermarket in Ware. AA Thursdays, 7:30pm

UNITED CHURCH OF WARE
49 Church Street, Ware, MA 01082
413-967-9981

Office Hours: Monday 9-12/Tuesday 8:30-12:30/
Wed 9-2/Thurs 9-12/Friday closed

Saturday: Worship service 5:00 p.m. (Communion offered each week, Healing Worship on second Saturday of each month)
Narcotics Anonymous 7:00 p.m.
Sunday: Worship service 10:30 a.m. (Communion offered first Sunday of each month)
Adult Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday School - 10:45 a.m., Children's Church after Children's Sermon each Sunday. Coffee hour after service
Tuesday: T.O.P.S. 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday: Weight Watchers 5:00-7:30 p.m.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH
17 North Street, Ware
ST. MARY'S CHURCH
57 South Street, Ware
Pastor: Rev. Fr. Piotr Calik

General Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday: 9am - 12pm; Friday: Closed
Cemetery Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday: 10am - 2pm; Friday: Closed
Phone numbers: 413-967-5913; 413-967-4963
Fax Number: 413-967-4679
Emails: allsaintschurch17@gmail.com
stmaryschurch60@gmail.com
www.allsaintsware.org • www.stmarysware.org

Mass Schedule:
4:00 PM Saturday - All Saints
5:15 PM Saturday - St. Mary's

8:00 AM Sunday - All Saints
9:30 AM Sunday - St. Mary's
5:15 PM Sunday - All Saints

WEEKDAY MASSES
Monday and Tuesday 7:30 AM at All Saints
Wednesday and Thursday 7:30 AM at St. Mary's
First Friday 8:00 AM at All Saints
First Saturday 8:00 AM at St. Mary's

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION
All Saints - Saturday 3:00 - 3:30 PM
St. Mary's - Saturday before the 5:15 PM Mass

HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION
Vigil: 5:30 pm at All Saints
Day: 7:30 am - All Saints
12:10 pm - St. Mary's
6:30 pm - St. Mary's

Parish Office for both Churches is located at 60 South Street, Ware - MA 01082.
Due to Covid-19 pandemic time our office is open by appointment only.

THE CHURCH OF ST. ALOYSIUS
58 Church St., Gilbertville, Tel. 477-6493
The Rev. Richard Lembo, Pastor
Saturday Confession: 3 p.m.; Vigil Mass: 4 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 7:30 a.m.

ST. AUGUSTINE MISSION
98 Church Lane, Wheelwright, MA
413-477-6493
The Rev. Richard Lembo, Pastor
Sunday 9 a.m.

HOLY CROSS POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH
61 Maple St., Ware, Tel. 967-3782
Fr. Senior Fryderyk Banas, Pastor
Sunday: 9 a.m. Mass

LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH
(formerly QVBC)
258A Malbouef Road, Ware
Phone: 413-668-7041
Email: LBC7@gmail.com
Web: www.lbc7.com
Sunday Service times:
9:30am Prayer and Fellowship
10:00am Bible School
11:00am Worship Service

The LBC family of believers invite you to join us as we work together to serve God in our community.

We are dedicated to spiritual growth through purposeful prayer, truthful teaching, and practical preaching.

We rely on the Bible as our source of all Godly wisdom and truth.
We proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior given freely by God and offered to all who choose to believe in Him.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
33 West Main St. West Brookfield
Tel. 508-867-3667
Pastor Christy Wright

Worship and Sunday School, Sundays 9:30 am followed by coffee hour.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
108 New Braintree Rd., North Brookfield
774-286-1322
SUNDAY SCHEDULE Services start at 10 a.m.

TRI-PARISH COMMUNITY CHURCH
3 Oakham Rd., P.O. Box 202
New Braintree 508-867-3306

The Tri-Parish Community Church represents the communities of Gilbertville, Hardwick, and New Braintree. Our service will begin at 10:00. Bible Study begins on 9/13 at 8:15 am - 9:30am. Choir Rehearsals are at 9am and Sunday School returns on 9/13 at 10:00 am. We are worshipping at The First Universalist Church of Hardwick, 9 Ruggles Hill Rd. Hardwick through December.

All are welcome to worship and join in fellowship and light refreshment following the service.

Change of Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 10am - noon. Heidi Jeldres, Administrative Assistant. (508)867-3306 tri-parish@verizon.net.

Appointments can be scheduled at either the Pastor's office or at your home when needed. Please contact Pastor Deb to make arrangements. debasheps@aol.com or (413)478-0731. Beginning 7/6 our Worship Service move to The First Universalist Church of Hardwick through the end of the year. From 7/6 - 8/31 Worship will begin at 9:30 am. All are welcome.

The mission of the Tri-Parish Community Church is service to God by working together as a church to alleviate suffering and to foster hope, love and the word of Jesus Christ among our family and neighbors here and throughout the world.

It's always good to have a variety of voices in the pulpit. Come, support our worship leaders and enjoy the earlier service.

ST. PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH
1082 Main Street, Warren, Tel. 436-7327
MASS SCHEDULE: Sundays 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m.

ST. STANISLAUS CHURCH
2270 Main Street, West Warren
MASS SCHEDULE Saturdays 4 p.m.

QUABBIN VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST
43 Main Street, Ware, MA
Sunday Morning service: 10:30am – 11:30am

For more info James Chaisson
774-200-0542
Email: goodnews@quabbinvalleychurch.net
Website: www.quabbinvalleychurch.net

KINGDOM BUSINESS R.E.A.C.H MINISTRIES

(Realistic Evangelistic Active Christian Hearts)
Pastor, Rev. Dr. Errol J. Estridge
58 Main St, Ware, MA Tel. 413-668-9981
email:thekingdombusiness.ware@verizon.net
Tues 6-7pm, Substance Recovery Ministry
Wednesday 6:00-7:00 pm, Bible Study
Thursday 6:00-7:30 pm, Women Ministry
Friday 6:00-7:00 pm, Prayer Meeting
Saturday TBA, Men's Ministry
Sunday 10:30, Sunday Worship
C.H.A.N.C.E. Tutoring Ministry
(Children Having a Nurturing and Caring Environment)
September - May, After school, Monday - Thursday 4:00-6:00pm

UPPER ROOM CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
18 Central St., West Warren, Tel. 436-7559

Joel Hickey, pastor
Sunday: 10 a.m. worship; Thursday: 7 p.m. Intercessory Prayer

UNIVERSALIST-UNITARIAN
St. Paul's Church of Palmer
1060 Central St., Palmer, MA, 283-8185

Sunday: 10:00 am service followed by coffee hour. Children's Religious Education also at 10:00 am.

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART PARISH
Sacred Heart Church 22 W. Main St., West Brookfield

& St. Mary Oratory 11 Lincoln St., Brookfield
508 867-6469
rectory@sacredheartwb.com
website: ourladyofthesacredheart.org

Mass Times:
M-Th 8:00am @ Sacred Heart
Saturday Vigil 4:30pm @ St. Mary
Sunday 8:00am & 10:30am @ Sacred Heart
Holy Day Vigil 7:00pm @ St. Mary
Holy Day 9:00am @ St. Mary & 7:00pm @ Sacred Heart

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WEST BROOKFIELD, UCC

36 N. Main St., W. Brookfield, 508-867-7078
Interim Pastor - The Rev. Stacey Kullgren
Worship 10 AM
Sunday School - 10 AM (except the first Sunday of each month)
Call for Bible Study and Youth Group meeting times.

WARE BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH
56a Main St., Ware, Tel. 967-0211
Pastor Jim Van Etten, B.A.D.F.
Sunday: 11 a.m. worship service, nursery and children's church, 4 p.m. worship service
Wednesday: 7 p.m. Bible Study/Prayer Fellowship

WARE CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
Sunday 10:00 a.m. Weekend Meeting
Tuesday 7:00 p.m. Midweek Meeting

EMMANUEL ORTHODOX CATHOLIC CHURCH
25 Winthrop Terrace, Warren, MA 01083
(413) 436-5582

Fr. Christopher Nerreau
www.emmanuelorthodox.org
Morning Matins Sundays 9:00am
Confession 2nd Sunday of the month 9:00am or by appointment
Holy Mass Sunday's 9:30am, Coffee hour following Mass
Free Community Meal: First Tuesday of the month. All are welcome

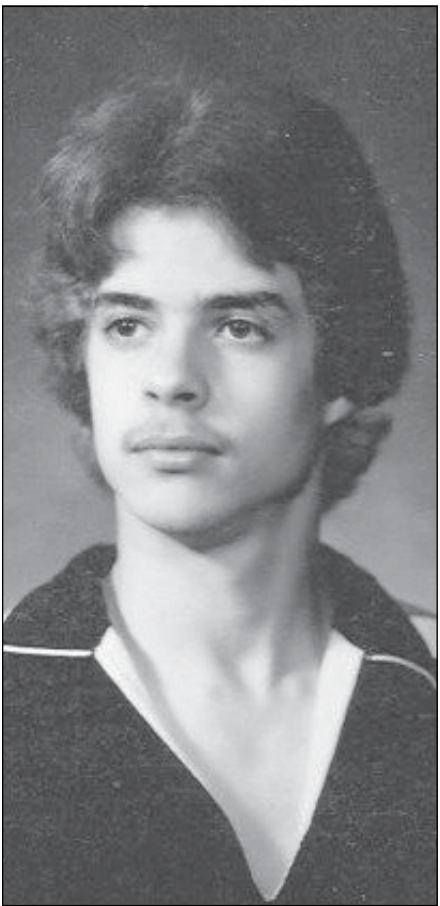
A Remembrance In Loving Memory

CLINTON M. KING

passed away on January 29, 2018 at UMass in Worcester, MA. He left behind his mother Doris M. King and his brother Jann (Sam) King and companion Kristen, and an Aunt Judy Kenyon of Tennessee and her husband Roger, cousins and many friends.

Clint loved boating and fishing and spent a few July 4ths at the Charles River in Boston to enjoy their annual fireworks. He loved animals especially his beloved dog, Oden. Clint was a very kind and generous person always giving his time and expertise to help friends and others to repair any type of repair needed. There wasn't much he couldn't fix. At Christmas time he would give generous gifts to his relatives and to the toy campaigns at his workplace. He enjoyed his job at Lamcotec, Inc. in Monson, MA and worked there for several years. Previously he ran a small business of his own called Super-Coats which was electronic paint spraying. Prior to that he worked for his brother in the concrete business.

We thank you, Clint, for all the love and joy you gave us. You are greatly missed each and every day and will be forever loved by your family and friends. May God bless your soul and the angels watch over you.



public notices

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Board of Selectmen will conduct a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 7:10 p.m.**, in the Selectmen’s Meeting Room, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to determine if property at 13 Parker Street, Ware, MA is dilapidated, dangerous, unsafe or otherwise constitutes a nuisance, in accordance with MGL Chapter 139, Section 1, and to take any action thereto. The Board of Selectmen will receive comments from interested residents at the hearing, or residents may send written comments to Town Manager, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082. **This notice shall also be posted on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association’s (MNPA) website (<http://masspublicnotices.org>).**

All interested parties are invited to attend.

Alan G. Whitney
Chairman
Board of Selectmen
01/28/2021

LEGAL NOTICE

The Ware Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **February 10, 2021, at 6:30 PM** pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. 131 c40. The hearing will include consideration of a Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) by Coffey Hill Properties, Llc, for construction of a new single family dwelling at Lot 45 Coffey Hill Road, Parcel 19-45. Said hearing will be held in the Selectmen’s Meeting Room, Town Hall, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082. To view application and related plans, contact the Conservation office at 413.967.9648 x117. 01/28/2021

(SEAL) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT

19 SM.003333

ORDER OF NOTICE TO: Heirs, Devisees or Legal Representatives of the Estate of Robert W. Fontaine, Daniel A. Fontaine, Russell R. Fontaine, Heirs, Devisees or Legal Representatives of the Estate of Roberta L. Fontaine, and Andrew O. Fontaine

and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 *et seq.*,
PennyMac Loan Services, LLC

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Ware, numbered 36 Gould Road, given by Robert W. Fontaine to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Bank of America, N.A., dated January 28, 2011, and recorded in Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 10469, Page 170, and now held by Plaintiff by assignment, have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendants’ Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **2/22/2021** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of non-compliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of this Court on 1/8/2021.

Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
01/28/2021

LEGAL NOTICE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS TOWN OF HARDWICK NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions and statutes relating thereto, application is hereby made for a license pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 138, section 12. The applicant Lost Towns Brewing Company, Main Street, Gilbertville, MA, Paul F. McNeil, Manager, is requesting a license to sell Malt Beverages under MGL Chapter 138, Section 15 Farmer Series Pouring License. Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on this application on **Monday, February 8, 2021 at 7:20 PM**. The hearing will be held remotely/virtually. Instructions to attend this hearing will be posted on the February 8, 2021 Board of Selectmen’s Agenda located on www.townofhardwick.com and www.mytowngovernment.org. Any person wishing to comment may do so at that time. Written comments, addressed to the Board of Selectmen, will also be accepted if submitted prior to the date and time of the hearing.

Kenan P. Young, Chairman
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF HARDWICK
01/28/2021

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING MEETING Project File No. 605126
A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be published

on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Bridge Replacement project in Town of Ware, MA.

WHEN: **Wednesday, February 10, 2021**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Bridge Replacement project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of the work for the Route 32(Palmer Road) over the Ware River Bridge. The project involves the replacement of the bridge superstructure and substructure of Bridge W-05-015. It also involves roadway construction, drainage improvements, upgrading the bridge rail and the replacement of existing sidewalks for the associated roadway, and geometric improvements to the intersection of Palmer Road and Old Belchertown Road. Guardrail will be installed to provide errant vehicle protection from the Ware River and will be installed on both sides of the roadway. The project will, widen both the bridge and the road to sufficiently meet Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) design criteria. Pedestrian accommodations consist of sidewalks on both sides of the bridge will be ADA accessible.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The town of Ware is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT’s policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertak-

ing are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Major Projects, Project File No. **605126**. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the hearing is posted to the MassDOT website listed below. Project inquiries may be emailed to **dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us**.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g. interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT’s Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This Virtual Design Public Hearing or a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at **www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings**.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR
PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER
01/28,02/04/2021

LEGAL NOTICE

The Ware Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, February 10, 2021, at 6:30 PM** pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. 131 c40. The hearing will include consideration of a **Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA)** by Martin Murphy, for construction of a single family home on Lot A Old Gilbertville Road. Said hearing will be held in the Selectmen’s Meeting Room, Town Hall, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082. To view application and related plans, contact the Conservation office at 413.967.9648. Pursuant to MGL Chapter 4, Section 13, a copy of this legal notice can be found on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association’s (MNPA) website: <http://masspublicnotices.org>. 1/28/2021

LEGAL NOTICE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS TOWN OF HARDWICK NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions and statutes relating thereto, application is hereby made for a license pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 138, section 12. The applicant Rose 32 Bread, 412 Main Street, Gilbertville, MA, Glenn Mitchell, co-owner, is requesting a license to sell Wine and Malt Beverages under MGL Chapter 138, Section 15 (Off Premise) License. Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on this application on **Monday, February 8, 2021 at 7:00 PM**. The hearing will be held remotely/virtually. Instructions to attend this hearing will be posted on the February 8, 2021 Board of Selectmen’s Agenda located on www.townofhardwick.com and www.mytowngovernment.org.

HOW TO SUBMIT PUBLIC NOTICES

All public notices to be published in the *Ware River News* should be sent directly to notices@turley.com. Please indicate the newspapers and publication date(s) for the notice(s) in the subject line of your email. For questions regarding coverage area, procedures or cost, please call 413-283-8393.

Turley Publications, Inc. publishes 14 weekly newspapers throughout Western Massachusetts. Visit www.turley.com for more information.

townofhardwick.com and www.mytowngovernment.org. Any person wishing to comment may do so at that time. Written comments, addressed to the Board of Selectmen, will also be accepted if submitted prior to the date and time of the hearing.
Kenan P. Young, Chairman
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
01/28/2021

LEGAL NOTICE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS TOWN OF HARDWICK NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions and statutes relating thereto, application is hereby made for a license pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 138, section 12. The applicant South Barre Rod and Gun Club, 2626 Barre Road, Wheelwright, MA, Paul Morrison, Manager, is requesting a license to sell Wine and Malt Beverages under MGL Chapter 138, Section 15 (On Premise) License. Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on this application on **Monday, February 8, 2021 at 7:10 PM**. The hearing will be held remotely/virtually. Instructions to attend this

hearing will be posted on the February 8, 2021 Board of Selectmen’s Agenda located on www.townofhardwick.com and www.mytowngovernment.org. Any person wishing to comment may do so at that time. Written comments, addressed to the Board of Selectmen, will also be accepted if submitted prior to the date and time of the hearing.
Kenan P. Young, Chairman
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF HARDWICK
01/28/2021



Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

STUDY from page 1

created by the MassDOT study.

“We have to keep pushing it forward so it’s on their radar,” committee Chair Ben Hood said.

“Sometimes they have money and you have to ask for it. I always hoped they would want to invest in [transportation infrastructure].”

According to the report, “the study has entailed a comprehensive civic engagement process involving residents, the study’s Advisory Committee – a group comprised of individuals representing diverse perspectives from Pittsfield to Boston, and other stakeholders in a series of meetings and through online interaction. This included cooperative development of the following goals for the project:

- Provide better transportation options to and from Western Massachusetts
- Support economic development throughout the East – West rail corridor
- Improve the attractiveness of Western Massachusetts as an affordable place to live
- Reduce the number of automobile trips along the corridor
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air quality impacts from transportation

It also shares many of the same conclusions as advocates of the plan, including members of the steering committee and Citizens for a Palmer Rail Stop.

“MassDOT recognizes that a robust transportation system is essential to providing residents, businesses, and visitors with mobility to satisfy their economic, personal and recreational needs. Passenger rail transportation can be an important component of a multi-modal transportation system that increases travel options and reduces greenhouse gas emissions,” the report states.

The report also says that “Fast and frequent passenger rail service in the East-West Rail Corridor could enhance mobility and connectivity for Corridor communities, provide residents and stakeholders

with additional travel options, and catalyze new economic opportunities, such as development around stations. Improved connectivity among job centers and better mobility for potential workers could increase employment opportunities for workers and expand the talent pool available to employers by better linking the western, central, and eastern regions of the Commonwealth with each other and with a broader travel market.”

There are three final alternatives in the study, which carries the weight of a \$1 million investment by the state and does back up at least some of the advocates’ claims of the benefits the rail line would provide. All of the alternatives include depots in Palmer and Springfield.

Still, it did not offer the robust endorsement some hoped for.

“It’s not what we wanted, but it didn’t close the door,” Hood said.

What’s next

Now, he said, the committee needs to focus on “thinking about how this affects Palmer.”

Committee member and Palmer Town Planner Linda Leduc isn’t completely satisfied, but she took away some positives.

“It’s an interesting study,” she said.

“It was limited in scope [but] it needed to be done to get us to the next phase of engineering and construction. MassDOT is trying to move us out of the planning stage. In Palmer, we did all the things we needed to do to get in all the alternatives, which is a great result.”

Like others, Leduc contests the study’s estimate of ridership and said it’s critical to present accurate numbers that will allow the project to become eligible for federal funding – a high bar. She remains convinced MassDOT does not project a realistic figure and that taking a second look – as MassDOT calls for in the study – will reveal a more favorable cost benefit assessment.

“One thing I thought was interesting is this traditional assessment did not include an extensive look



Stops along the way, including a Palmer depot, of a proposed passenger line from Pittsfield to Boston.

into cost benefit,” Leduc said.

“The position of the state to better itself with the federal calculation – which we fall very short of getting any federal money – we need to raise that. We have a true benefit from the rail stop that can [improve] that calculation.”

Costs

Costing upwards of \$1 billion, the project is likely to face steep opposition by state and federal budget hawks, necessitating the need, Leduc and other committee members said, to lobby lawmakers who have not already pledged their support. U.S. Rep. Richard Neal said he’s for creating the passenger line. Leduc and Hood both noted that President Joe Biden could be a likely ally.

Unlike assistance with road and air projects, municipal rail construction is not typically earmarked for federal funding, Leduc said.

Legislative support

“Not a single state in the country gets federal assistance for a rail project,” she said. “The only way to get federal funding is to get an increase in our benefit cost and potentially get that federal calculation viewed differently. Cost will be a big problem moving forward. We need to have conversations with our federal

legislators. Joe Biden historically has been supportive of rail, so that’s all good.”

Hood agreed.

“I think our politicians will be important in this,” he said.

So far, so good.

“All of our representatives in the western part of the state and even further west, are hot on this issue,” Leduc said.

Both of them credited state Senators Eric Lesser and Anne Gobi and Mass. House Rep. Todd Smola for their support. Committee members agreed on the need to remain proactive.

After the study was released earlier this month, Lesser issued a statement in which he called the report “an important step in moving this project from conception to reality.”

“As MassDOT acknowledges, the study remains incomplete,” Lesser said. “Most importantly, the ridership estimates are far too low and do not reflect comparable rail links around the country or the economic growth the rail line will spur. The study also does not take into account the significant environmental benefits from the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions as tens of thousands of cars are taken off the road.”

Looking forward

There could be more public

money available to help get the projecting moving forward. If Gov. Charlie Baker signs the legislature’s transportation bond bill into law, more money would become available to pay for construction planning.

“Palmer has a place in there,” Hood said. “If Gov. Baker signs it and that money becomes available, that would be a way of moving forward. Eventually, it could snowball into bigger things.”

Committee member Sarah Szebak asked during the Jan. 14 meeting if the town would be responsible for the cost of building a platform and others wondered who decides where the platform would be built, sparking a in-depth discussion.

Scarlet Lamothe, manager of Steaming Tender, created inside the old Palmer rail depot building, signed into the Zoom meeting from inside the restaurant. The old station could be repurposed to create new one, she suggested.

“The station that I’m in right now – is that something that can be discussed?” Lamothe asked.

“We haven’t been able to get down to those nitty gritty details,” Leduc said. “Is it time? I think it could be. It might be time for the town to spend some money to [study and] narrow down the best location.”

“As far as location of the platform, that’s something the town and engineers have to figure out,” Anne Miller said. “It can go a lot of different ways. Palmer may not be in position to do that. I think working out the location is something we need to do in advance so the federal government doesn’t come in and say ‘no, it should go here.’”

Miller is amenable to creating a Palmer depot in or around the old one and noted the Steaming Tender, opened by Lamothe’s parents, acquired property around the restaurant.

“I think that should be part of the conversation,” Miller said.

“This is something I think we need to put together soon – ASAP,” Lamothe said.

“We have to show MassDOT we’re ready for this. They don’t know our town. We have to put it in place for them and say here’s the solution and maybe give them a second option.”

Palmer Town Council President Lorinda Baker, who also serves on the committee, said east-west rail advocates might have an inside track with the Biden administration – Buttigieg. She said she heard the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., who ran for president in 2020, is at least an acquaintance, if not a friend, of Lesser.

Lesser referenced Buttigieg in his statement:

“The study comes at the right moment given President-Elect Biden’s long history of infrastructure advocacy, and his passion for train transportation in particular, along with his nominee to be Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg,” Lesser said.

Setting priorities

While the study presents various scenarios of how and where actual construction would begin, the committee members all agree that the Springfield phase should get priority. The study itself called it a “worthwhile starting point.” Hood and Miller sent a letter recently to Baker and Mass. Secretary of Transportation Stephanie Pollack asking for it.

“Indeed the need for expanded rail service between the three largest cities in the Commonwealth should take priority, especially when there is almost no train service at present between two of them,” they said in the letter.

“This first phase of a phased approach to East-West passenger rail would address the greatest need, which is to connect Springfield to Worcester and Boston. This first phase would have an added advantage that it could utilize the detailed work already done as part of the NNEIRI study, as well as the findings and recommendations of the East-West Passenger Rail Study.”

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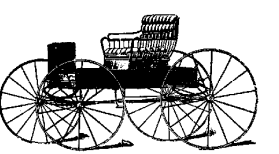


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DEADLINES: QUABBIN & SUBURBAN – **FRIDAY AT NOON**
HILLTOWNS – **MONDAY AT NOON**

CATEGORY:			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	Base Price \$26.50	22	Base Price \$27.00
23	Base Price \$27.50	24	Base Price \$28.00
25	Base Price \$28.50	26	Base Price \$29.00
27	Base Price \$29.50	28	Base Price \$30.00
29	Base Price \$30.50	30	Base Price \$31.00
31	Base Price \$31.50	32	Base Price \$32.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	34	Base Price \$33.00
35	Base Price \$33.50	36	Base Price \$34.00
37	Base Price \$34.50	38	Base Price \$35.00
39	Base Price \$35.50	40	Base Price \$36.00

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Number of Weeks: _____ X per week rate = \$ _____

Credit Card: ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ Discover ☐ Cash ☐ Check# _____

Card #: _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV _____

Amount of charge: _____ Date: _____

Quabbin
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Circulation: 50,500

Hilltowns
Circulation: 9,800

Suburban
Residential
Circulation: 59,000

Buy the Quabbin Village Hills or the Suburban Residential ZONE for \$26.00 for 20 words plus 50¢ for each additional word. Add \$10 for a second Zone or add \$15 to run in ALL THREE ZONES.

First ZONE base price _____ *Includes additional words*

Add a second ZONE **\$10.00**

Add a third ZONE **\$5.00**

Subtotal _____

x Number of Weeks _____

TOTAL Enclosed _____

Run my ad in the following ZONE(s):

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☐ Suburban

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TOTAL CIRCULATION 70,700
PUBLICATION DATE February 17, 2021

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is offering our local businesses an opportunity to advertise at a **reduced rate!**

Chantel Bleau Accounting

- Business profile - 250 words
- Photo - yourself, employees or building
- Advertisement - 3 x 6

ALL FOR ONLY \$239

This special section will run in the April 1st issue of The Ware River News & The Journal Register.

Ad deadline: March 17, 2021

Quarter page ad with story (4.75x6) \$239
Half page ad with story (9.75x6) \$399
Full page ad with story (9.75x13) \$559

Contact Dan Flynn to reserve your space today
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Chicken Burrito Bowl

DINNER SPECIAL
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